

CIVILIZATION & PROGRESS.

BY

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PREFACE

TO THE

THIRD EDITION.

IT were tedious to the reader were I to recount here the various mischances—want of stereotyping, etc.—which have kept this work out of print for more than three years, in the face of a steadily increasing public demand, but in issuing a new edition it is necessary, perhaps, that I should offer some remarks on the alterations and additions which I have deemed it expedient to make in the original text

The alterations are few, being limited chiefly to the titles of one or two of the chapters, my object being to enable the reader to see more clearly, and at a glance, the essential connexions of the successive chapters in a work, the subject-matter of which is so wide and complex that the approaches to it must of necessity be more or less circuitous and involved. And accordingly, for ‘How is Justice done?’ the original title of the first chapter of the Second Part, I have substituted ‘How is Civilization possible?’, and for ‘The End of Government?’ the title of the second chapter of the same Part, I have substituted ‘The End of Civilization’, and have

added a word or two here and there in the text to illustrate these changes.

Of more importance than these alterations are the additions which I have felt it necessary to make in order to give the work a greater completeness; the addition, viz., of a section on Hegel's 'Philosophy of History,' in the historical retrospect at the beginning of Part VI., where I pass in review the contributions made to the solution of the problem of Civilization by preceding thinkers; and a section more fully explaining the New Organon or method which I have used in the investigation of this problem, to be found in the chapter under that title in Part I.

The reason I have added the short section on Hegel's 'Philosophy of History,' is that some of my critics with Hegelian leanings have felt that the book was incomplete without some reference to this really great and important work of their revered master, and although I have placed him somewhat out of his strict chronological order, I am in hopes that by so doing I have made his contribution to the Philosophy of Civilization—what he did and what he left undone—all the more clearly seen.

As to the additional section on the New Organon or instrument which I have used for the solution of the problems of Civilization, it has been rendered almost necessary by the difficulty which several thoughtful and competent critics have found in grasping precisely what it was that I specially meant by this new instrument. This difficulty has been felt chiefly by two classes of men; on the one hand by the pure Metaphysicians

who profess to deal with the laws of the mind as seen from the side of consciousness and on the other by the scientific Psychologists, who profess to deal with the same laws from the side of the brain and nervous system. Now, it so happened that I had myself defined the New Organon which I proposed to use as 'the Laws of the Mind in its entirety and as a concrete whole' but I meant by this neither the *analysis* of the mind into its component parts—into the intellect, the will, the imagination, the sentiments, the passions, &c—of the Metaphysician, nor its analysis from the side of the brain of the Psychologist, but understood by it rather what the ordinary reader would understand by it, viz, *the laws that connect and relate these parts to one another*—the intellect to the will, the will to the imagination, the imagination to the sentiments and passions, and so on—laws all of them which one may see exhibited in the concrete and with the greatest subtlety in Shakespeare's play of Othello for example. It was mental *laws* of this kind, and not the mere *analysis* with which the Metaphysicians and Psychologists dealt, that I proposed to use for the first time as the keys by which to unlock the secrets of the problem of Civilization. But as the phrase 'laws of the human mind' had never been used by the Metaphysicians and Psychologists in this sense, it was natural that they should be left in some perplexity and difficulty. Had they been willing, however, to wait and gather the meaning of the definition from its application to the special problems that arose in the sequel, rather than to fix on what was after all merely a preliminary, and, therefore, necessarily bare, abstract definition, their

difficulties would have disappeared of themselves. That there is no real difficulty in the matter may be seen at once, if we remember that Civilization being a product of the *entire* nature and mind of man, of human nature in short, unless we can complete the entire circuit of connection of all its parts—the intellect with the will, the will with the imagination, the imagination with the sentiments and desires, and so on—and make the laws of these connections our instrument and *standpoint of interpretation*, it will not really be human nature with which we are dealing, but rather some emasculated metaphysical abstraction of it; and our results in consequence instead of being predicable of human beings and of what they will do or avoid, will turn out to be mere utopias and dreams. Nor need these laws be so many in number as we might at first suppose. Civilization being a problem of men in *societies and masses*, and not of the mere individual, it is only such laws of the mind as are commensurate with society as a whole and have a *social* import that have a bearing on our problem; and not those which, as in the drama and novel, pertain only to the private and individual heart, and which in society neutralize one another. These *social* laws of the mind, if I may so call them, are and must be after all comparatively few in number. But though few in number they are the widest, the deepest, and the most comprehensive that can connect man with man, and are in consequence inaccessible to thinkers who will persist in taking their stand on more special and less comprehensive points of view; to such Physical Scientists, for example, as are wedded exclusively to the laws of Physical

Nature ; or such Practical Men as think only of the application of these laws to existing conditions ; to those Physicians and Psychologists who added exclusively to physiological and pathological laws of the brain and nervous system ; to Judges, Jurists, and Attorneys who refuse to see beyond the laws of evidence and of prudential motive ; to Theologians and Religious Teachers who are wrapped up exclusively in the relations of all thought to piety and devotion ; to Novelists and Dramatists who will not quit the private hearth, or the laws of revenge, of jealousy, or of love ; and, finally, to Practical Politicians and Statesmen who cannot dilate their sight beyond the relations between particular classes in the same country, or between particular countries and the world at large. It is true, indeed, that the results arrived at by all these special workers must be used as material for the problem of Civilization, and their special intellectual methods as *instruments of research* ; but unless these methods are dropped and thrown aside as *standpoints of interpretation* when they approach the wider problem of Civilization, there will be no chance of their seeing the problem as a whole. That I was not wrong in believing that the organon I have used is the true one, has been gratifyingly brought home to me by the unlooked-for recognition which this book has received from the most widely different quarters, from men who differ from one another on almost every point of speculation, as well as from men from whose principles I have myself in some one or more important particulars been obliged profoundly to dissent ; from Roman Catholics, for

example, in spite of my chapter on Newman; from the orthodox of all shades, in spite of my chapter on Supernaturalism; from Atheists and Agnostics, in spite of my chapter on First Principles; from Positivists, in spite of my chapters on Comte; from Tories, in spite of my chapters on Aristocracy; and from Democrats, Socialists, and Radicals, in spite of some sections in my chapters on Democracy.

But what is the function of this New Organon, it may be asked, and how does it operate in the discovery of truth? The answer is that its function is the same as that of a higher calculus in mathematics, enabling us to solve problems insoluble by ordinary methods. For just as the relations of some general (x) or (y) in Algebra will solve problems impossible to Arithmetic where you have to deal with particular numbers and amounts, so those relations between each part of the mind and every other which I have made my organon, will, when put into abstract form and generalized, solve problems of society which lie beyond the reach of any science or method of observation which deals only with the individual mind.

Among the results which I claim from my application of this New Organon—to which alone is due any contribution I may have been permitted to make to existing thought—I may mention that besides enabling me to accomplish the main object of this work, viz., the completing the circuit of those great Laws of Civilization which previous thinkers had left undetermined; it has enabled me to give scientific demonstration and precision to a number of doctrines which

had either been inadequately stated by preceding writers, or had been seen only in glimpses, but the accurate determination of which was essential to the harmony and completeness of my theory as a whole. Of these I may instance, for example, the exposition of the part played by History in civilization and culture, of the relations that exist between Religion and Science, between Religion and Morality, and between Morality and Science, all of which are involved in the very groundwork of Civilization, and must be solved before the larger problem can even be entered upon. I have also pointed out the fallacy that lies at the root of Newman's theological method, the central fallacies and neglects in the political doctrines of Comte and Carlyle, and the illusions in political thinking which have resulted from the neglect of the element of Time.

But besides giving greater precision to views that hitherto have been vague and shadowy, I think I may fairly claim to have made by means of this *New Organon* certain distinct additions to existing thought, and to have given solutions if I may be permitted to say so, to problems which have hitherto been regarded as insoluble, solutions which if finally ratified must revolutionize the whole drift of philosophic speculation. Among these I may mention the following. First, there is the solution of the problem so often propounded by Carlyle as if it were an unanswerable enigma, viz., 'Given a universe of knaves, how to get a common honesty from their united action?' a solution I may add without which no theory of Civilization can so much as get a foothold or point

of departure. Then there is the discovery that although according to Science nothing need be *believed* that cannot be *scientifically known*, there are six truths at least which *must* be believed although they cannot be scientifically known (for all Science is based on them, and not they on it), a discovery which if true, must for ever give the *coup de grâce* to Physical Science as a *standpoint of interpretation* for the great problems of the World and of Human Life. Again there is the demonstration of the existence of *intellectual epochs*, in crossing the borderland of which, principles become so reversed that you have the apparent paradox that what was intellectually credible in the time say of St. Paul, must by the same logic be incredible to-day—a demonstration which if accepted must be the death-knell of all forms of Supernaturalism. And again there is the exhibition of certain unresolvable mental facts, among others the ‘scale in the mind,’ for example, which when their implications are clearly seen must be fatal to Scientific Materialism. Besides these doctrines there is set forth a new view of the World whereby the problem of Evil takes quite a different complexion, so that the very statement of the problem of Religion and Sin becomes revolutionized. And again there is the enunciation and demonstration of the two great Laws on which all religions are constructed, and along the lines of which they are evolved, laws which if they prove true will at once throw open the secrets of Religion and the parts played by it in civilization and life. And lastly there is the exhibition under all Religions, of Philosophies which have not only given rise to most of the

hitherto existing anomalies of the subject, but which explain at a glance the mysteries of religious ritual and practice,—of prayer, of offering, of religious persecution, of sacrifice, and the like

Now, unless I am deceived, the above are all real additions to the stock of existing thought on these subjects. That they are true as well as new I am myself convinced, and am persuaded that they will stand any strain that may be brought to bear on them, even that severest of all tests, viz, that on each and all of them scientific predictions may be hung. Of all this the reader of course must be the judge, but should he agree with me in regarding these doctrines as true, I must still beg him to believe that they are due entirely to the organon which I have used throughout and not to myself—that organon, without which not only is there no chance of solving the problem of Civilization, but I will go farther and say, no chance of solving those problems of Politics that lie beyond the mere expediences of the hour, or of Life that lie above the merest worldly concerns. Indeed, so firm am I in my belief that this organon has all the virtues of a new mathematical calculus, that I will undertake to point out in any system of philosophy whatever that ignores it—whether it be a philosophy of the World, of Civilization, of Sociology, of Metaphysics, of Politics, of Political Economy, or of life in general—I will undertake I say, to point out where each of these systems must end in absurdity, utopia or impossibility. So great a stress do I lay on the employment of this new calculus,

organon, or method, call it what you will, for the solution of the higher problems of thought!

But I wish further to point out that for the *special* solutions achieved in this work, this organon would have availed me little had I not come sufficiently late into the field to take advantage of the rich heritage of thought left me by the great masters of my youth—Spencer, Comte, Gæthe, Carlyle, and Emerson—all of whom, with the exception of Spencer, have used, although more or less unconsciously as it were and without formal recognition, the organon to which I am myself so much indebted; so much so indeed that where they have but dropped it for a moment, there they will be found, as we shall see in the sequel, to have fallen into utopias and dreams. As to the special contributions which these great thinkers have made to my own course of thought as it washed their richly-laden shores; and how from each of them in turn I have been able to extract jewels which they, as contemporaries, were unable or indisposed to accept from one another; and after what a wide circuit of metaphysical and philosophical speculation, my own organon, apparently so simple, was reached; for all this I must refer the reader who may care to follow to a future volume, now far advanced, in which the whole course and evolution of my thought will be fully and clearly seen.

As to the teaching of such portions of this work as bear on those social and political questions which for some time to come must engage the thoughts and sentiments of men, I

may add that while the *end* at which my speculations aim is the *elevation and expansion of the individual mind*, and is, therefore, so far individualistic, the *means* by which I would reach that end lie in the *pressure on the individual of that moralized and enlightened public opinion* which must always continue to rise like a divine essence from the Ideal which exists in the hearts of all men—and are therefore so far socialistic.

I may further add, to avoid misunderstanding, that the belief in a Supreme Being, which is inculcated and enforced in these pages under whatever variety of name or title I may have chosen to designate Him—whether as First Cause, the Absolute God, the Deity, and the like—is not the belief in a God in the sense of the old Jehovah of the Jews, or even of the narrower orthodox sects of our own time, but in a Being who transcends while he includes the highest attributes of humanity.

In conclusion, I must apologise for the ambiguities which from the difficulty and complexity of the subject have made it almost a necessity that I should inflict this additional matter by way of preface on the already over-burdened reader.

October, 1892.

PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

THE high and generous recognition which has been accorded to this work by a few of the foremost thinkers and critics of the time makes it incumbent on me in issuing a new edition, to say a word or two on one and another of the various difficulties and objections which some of these critics have found either in my treatment of the subject, or in the special views and opinions presented for consideration.

The first of these objections turns on the New Organon or Method which I have proposed for the solution of the problems discussed, and the necessity there was for its introduction and use. Now, as the main object of this work was not so much to present the reader with a brand-new theory of Civilization, as to so re-arrange, modify, and develop the various elements of older theories as to fit them into a new and more harmonious structure it is evident that many complications, both in method and in treatment, had to be cleared away before I could enter with confidence on my central problem, which was—to determine, if possible, more accurately and scientifically than had hitherto been attempted, the relative parts played in

Civilization by the great organic factors of Religion, Government, Science, and Material and Social Conditions generally, and to connect these factors by such stringent laws and relations that the whole would be seen to form one single and harmonious scheme. In endeavouring to carry out my object, the first difficulty I had to encounter was that presented by the various and divergent standpoints occupied by existing students of Civilization—standpoints as various and divergent as the various sciences from which the problem was approached. The Historian, for example, whether of the narrative or the philosophical school, is apt to feel that a sufficient theory of Civilization will have been attained when once the mines of history shall have been minutely and exhaustively explored, and the results collated and embodied in some one or more wide and far-reaching generalizations; the Christian Theologian, when he has referred its phenomena to the presence or absence from the thoughts and lives of men of that Spirit which Christ promised to leave to the world after he was gone; while the Physical and Psychological Scientist thinks the course of Civilization sufficiently accounted for, either by representing it as the continuation into the mental and moral world of the same impersonal law of Evolution which rules the physical; or by referring many of its most striking phenomena—notably those fanaticisms and enthusiasms which have given rise to religions, and changed the face of the world—to the effects produced by material conditions of the brain on mental states. And as all these types of Thinkers have carried into their survey of Civilization the methods and standpoints of the

respective studies to which they are attached, and as, further, the method of each is considered by the rest to be false or incompetent, and all are felt to be more or less partial and incomplete, it was incumbent on me to try and discover, if possible, some new organon or method which should be commensurate with the full breadth of the problem to be solved, and which, while freely using all these various sciences as *instruments of investigation*, should become itself the sole and only *standpoint of interpretation*. Accordingly, after passing under review the various sciences—History, Physical Science, Metaphysics, Psychology, Theology, and the rest—and marking out the limits beyond which their various methods were inapplicable, I proceeded to explain my own method, which was simply this—to take my stand on Human Nature as we know it *to day*, to detach its laws from the web in which they lie and make them my standpoint of interpretation, while using the various sciences as subordinate instruments to furnish me with the materials and results required. Such is my new organon and the necessity I felt for its use and adoption. That there is nothing strange in this may be seen in the practice of those who have to deal with any wide class of confused and conflicting phenomena. The Statesman, for example who is obliged to call in for consultation and advice, lawyers, doctors, soldiers, seamen, vestrymen, and divines, is unable to take the standpoint of any of his advisers, but must occupy another and different one proper to his own particular problem, for while hearing what the doctors have to say as to the necessity of compulsory vaccination, he has still to consider the effects of

compulsion on individual liberty ; what the War Office and Admiralty have to say as to the necessity of increased armaments, has still to consider their relations to the public purse ; what the vestrymen or philanthropists have to say on the necessity of further poor-relief, has still to consider its effects on the springs and incentives of industry ; and the like.

Again, in endeavouring to show that all the old religions of the world contained, wrapped up in their structure, *philosophies* of the origin and nature of things more or less adapted to their age and time, I pointed out that the great rôle played by religions in the practical life of the past was due to these philosophies embedded in their creeds : and I contended that when once Science shall have taken over these philosophies from Religion, and added them to her own proper domain, as she is doing more and more every day, Religion, having lost its jurisdiction over that part of the field, will no longer have any effect on action, but will be restricted to its natural, proper, and perennial function of harmonizing the heart and mind. On arriving at this point, one of the acutest of my critics was brought to a stand, and imagining that my words conveyed the impression that Religion would no longer be of any practical value at all, argued, on the contrary, that a book might still be written to show how immense must ever be its practical influence on human life. Now the fault here, I have no doubt, lay with myself in not more distinctly explaining that when I said that Religion in the future would have no effect on action, what I meant was, not that it would not be of any practical value (for any theory that generates conviction, and gives unity

and harmony to both mind and heart, must give a stimulus and impulse to action which can never be attained when mind and heart are rent in twain by Scepticism), but that it would no longer dictate our *specific* actions, as, for example, whether we should take usury or not, drink wine or not, give alms or not, persecute heretics or not but would leave all this to its proper sphere of Science, with its balanced considerations of expediency, and its jurisdiction over the realm of calculable cause and effect

Another of my critics observing the immense influence often exerted over individual men by direct moral exhortation and appeal in spite of unfavourable physical and material conditions of life found fault with me for insisting as strongly as I did that the *controlling* factor in Civilization was not the more or less piercing of morality, but the material and social conditions of men, that, in truth, you can get at morality in societies only through improvements in these conditions, and that before you can get a further advance at any given stage, these conditions must be more *equalized*, the active agent in the successive equalizations being, as I have shown, Science in the widest *sense of that term, with its application to all the arts, comforts, and conveniences of life*. Now, although in saying this I myself fully recognize the great reclamations and improvements worked in individual natures by direct appeals to their intellects, consciences, and hearts, independently of any change in their merely material and social conditions, I feel still bound to point out, what my critic seems to have overlooked, that I am dealing in this work with the problem of Civilization, that is to say,

with the laws which govern the movements of men in societies and *masses*, and not with what concerns man as an *individual* unit; and that the laws which determine the progress of the one are practically as different from those which determine the progress of the other, as the laws of bodies in the mass are practically different from the laws of the particles of which they are composed. In actual life, this is everywhere recognized. If you take, for example, any high-class journal which deals alike with Politics and Religion—say, for example, *The Spectator*—and run your eye along the series of articles under each of these respective headings, you will find that the considerations advanced in the one case are quite different from those in the other; that while in the articles dealing with Religion, that is to say, those which appeal to man as an individual unit, the writer expects to influence the reader by presenting him with higher and truer ideas, with nobler standards of morality, and the like; in the articles dealing with Politics, or society *as a whole*, the argument proceeds almost entirely on the assumption that improvements are to be effected in men only by alterations in their general material and social conditions. The truth is, the two problems, viz., of Society and of the Individual, are quite distinct and separate in nature, and require quite distinct and separate treatment; and hence the large space devoted in this work to proving, by illustrations drawn from every quarter of life, that all attempts to forward civilization by *direct* moral exhortation or appeal, in the face of material and social conditions adverse to its reception, are dreams of the closet only.

In conclusion, I may add that in a work dealing with so wide and complex a subject as Civilization, it was inevitable that if I were to attain to results of a definite and scientific character, I should have to hew my way through all manner of obstructions, and through all forms of accepted doctrine and tradition. I hope, however, that in every instance in which I have been forced into collision with other and able minds, I shall be found to have represented them with that fairness, and spoken of them with that courtesy and respect, which is due alike to their high and unselfish aims, and to the depth of my own indebtedness to their labours; and in leaving the work to the reader, I trust I may rely on his giving it that patient consideration which not any pretensions of mine, but the importance of its subject, the sincerity of its purpose, and the long labour spent on it—some ten years in preparation, and four in actual construction and writing—may claim at his hands.

January, 1888.

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INTRODUCTORY.

IN the present work I propose to trace the great laws of Civilization and Progress, and to exhibit, in as systematic a form as possible, the parts played respectively in civilization by Religion Government, Science, and the general Material and Social Conditions of the world. But just as in a watch the connexion of each wheel and movement with every other must be known and adjusted before the watch can be of any practical service, or as in an electrical apparatus the connexion between all the links of the circuit must be established before the machine can be made available for working purposes, so until the laws which unite each of the great factors of civilization with every other are known and understood, we cannot have a theory of civilization which will be of practical value, either as enabling us the better to understand the Past, or as affording us guidance for the Future, the failure to apprehend the part played by any one of the factors completely vitiating the practical value of the theory as a whole. Now although the illustrious thinkers, who up to the present time have been engaged on the problem of civilization, have succeeded, in the face of enormous difficulties, in establishing the true relations existing between certain of the factors none of them, in my opinion, have clearly established the true relations existing between them all and none of them therefore have given us a theory of civilization that can lay any claim to completeness. Comte, for example, although he succeeded in working out, with great brilliancy and with an abundance of historical detail the relations existing between Religion and Science, failed to discover the link that united Religion with Material and Social

Conditions generally; and so was unable to bring a full and complete theory to bear on the interpretation of the past or the guidance of the present. Buckle, again, although he set forth with much force and clearness, the part played in civilization by Science, and by Material and Social Conditions, left the parts played by Religion and Government dark and confused; while Herbert Spencer, concerning himself only with demonstrating that civilization, like all other phenomena, follows the general law of Evolution, has not attempted to show the parts played in it respectively by religion, government, science, and material and social conditions. In attempting, therefore, to add to the inheritance of thought bequeathed to us by these great thinkers, I shall endeavour, by means of the superstructure which they have erected, to carry the solution of the problem a step higher, and by taking advantage of the lights which they have planted in different portions of the field, to carry the torch of science still farther into the darkness. But instead of pursuing the enquiries begun by them into further or finer detail, I prefer to concentrate all my efforts on the discovery of the laws uniting those factors which they have left unconnected; and so, if possible, by completing the circuit of connexion at all points, to establish the outlines of a philosophy of civilization which shall be sufficiently vital and well-jointed to stand on its feet, and enable us to interpret the Past, and in a measure afford us guidance for the Future. In the method, however, which I find it necessary to employ to reach my ends, I differ almost entirely from these distinguished thinkers. For while they have either, like Comte and Buckle, taken their stand on the past, and from the generalization of what are called the facts of history, have sought to interpret the present and forecast the future; or starting like Herbert Spencer, from some more or less comprehensive generalization of the external world—as, for example, from the law of evolution—have cast their hypotheses, like nets into the sea of history, landing only such facts as fall within their range; I

have taken as my point of departure the essential *identity* of the human mind in every age and clime, and have sought to trace the progress of civilization to the union of this constant nature with the various material and social conditions of the past, regarding the facts of history as instructive commentary only. In a word, while former thinkers have made historical data the main-stay of their theories, and have regarded the human mind as practically of subordinate importance, I have taken my stand on the constant nature of man, and have regarded the facts of history as but appendage and illustration.

To justify so wide a departure from the ordinary methods of interpretation, and to show that a new method is absolutely necessary and must be systematically employed if we are to attain to scientific truth in these higher departments of speculation I have opened with a section which I have entitled *A New Organon*. Under this section I have arranged most of the ordinary and recognised instruments of knowledge, physical and mental, and while attempting to show precisely the part they play in human thought and culture, I at the same time point out that none of them can furnish us with the organon we require for the problem of civilization. I show that while civilization includes within itself the great transactions of history, yet history, neither in its narrative nor in its philosophical form, can furnish us with what we require, that while it includes the great results of Physical Science, Physical Science is not the method, that while it has to do with the thoughts and feelings of men, neither Metaphysics nor Psychology, which deal with these thoughts and feelings, will serve us, that while it is largely concerned with commerce and industry, Political Economy cannot help us, and finally, that while it is full of the results of religious beliefs, Theology is of no avail for the solution of the problem. Having thus thrown out the ordinary instruments of knowledge as unsuited to my purpose, I then endeavour to show what that new organon is which must be persistently employed, if we are to establish a

science of civilization that shall bear practical fruit; and further, I show that it is to the neglect of this organon or instrument that are traceable not only the main illusions of life, but also most of those political and social utopias into which thinkers of the highest eminence have fallen, both in ancient and modern times.

Having illustrated in detail the importance of the new method which I propose to employ in my enquiries into the laws of civilization, I am in a position to enter on the main business of this work; and, accordingly after attempting to answer the question, How are Civilization and Progress possible at all, in a world where the selfish and anti-social instincts are stronger than the social and unselfish?—or, as Carlyle has it, *how from a world of knaves to get an honesty from their united action?*—I come to the first and all-essential problem to be solved, viz.: What is the *goal* of Civilization; the aim that Nature has at heart; the end to which all political and social arrangements are but means, and to which all individual efforts should be directed; and in determining this, I shall have indirectly determined the main and essential element in civilization itself. Now, in order to furnish a solution that shall be broad and comprehensive, at the same time that it is sufficiently definite and precise, I shall, in the first place, proceed by a direct inspection of Nature herself; and, in the second place (and by way of affording an indirect or side light on this important question, and bringing it into greater relief), I shall contrast the views held on it by the two opposite schools into one or other of which all systematic thinkers may be drafted; tracing these divergencies of opinion to their secret roots in opposite views of the nature of man, and of what constitutes his highest welfare. And as I give my own firm adhesion to the one side in this conflict of opposing camps, I hope to exhibit the weakness of the other by showing the primary laws of the human mind which it has neglected, and the utopias to which this neglect gives rise when projected, like the image of

a camera, on the vast canvas of the world. For just as the smallest angle at the centre of a circle, if ignored or neglected will subtend, in proportion to the vastness of the field, wide and unsightly gaps in the circumference; or as the smallest want of proportion in a miniature will, if sufficiently expanded, show as a foul and ugly distortion; so the smallest neglect of any of the primary laws of the human mind will, when embodied in theories of the world, in schemes of political regeneration, ideals of society, and the like, end in utopias and chimeras. An examination of the two most pregnant of these political and social utopias will serve to expose the errors that lie concealed in the central conceptions from which they take their rise, and will assist the reader to a just decision on the all-important question involved.

The goal to which Civilization is gradually tending being thus determined, I shall next attempt to estimate the parts played in it by Religion, Government, Science, and Material and Social Conditions respectively, in order that I may afterwards treat of these factors in combination, and show how the successive steps of progress have been slowly realised in the past—those moral conquests won by man from the realm of barbarism and night. And throughout the whole enquiry I shall follow the method indicated in the chapter on the *New Organon* seeking to bring the constant laws of the human mind in their fulness and entirety, to bear on the different periods of the past, always of course allowing for the difference in the circumstances and conditions of different times; much in the same way as, in a telescope, we allow for different distances by adjusting the segments, while the lens or eye of the instrument remains all the while unchanged.

In attempting to estimate the part played in civilization and progress by religion, I shall be obliged to define at the outset the sense in which the term religion is to be used, as of late years Comte and his disciples have put forward the claims of Humanity to be worshipped in the same sense, and on the same

footing, as the deities of the old religions. A critical examination accordingly of the *Religion of Humanity* will show us the special and exceptional sense in which alone Humanity can be legitimately said to be an object of religion, and will leave us with certain clearly-defined ideas with which to enter on the subject of religion in its wide and generally-accepted sense.

The way thus cleared, I shall invite the reader to a consideration of the subject of *Religion* in general, and my first attempt will be, after giving the question a form sufficiently definite to admit of a scientific solution, to point out the two great laws on which all religions whatever have been constructed, and along the lines of which they have all been, and will continue to be, evolved. If I shall have succeeded in carrying the reader with me so far, I shall then be in a position to mark out, more precisely and scientifically, the part played by religion in civilization and human life—its effects on the intellect, heart, and conduct of men; the laws on which religions are constructed being the other side, as it were, of the necessities of thought and feeling which these religions are adapted to meet and satisfy. And while some persons believe that religion does everything for human life, and others that it does nothing, or worse than nothing; my endeavour shall be to estimate, in as scientific a way as is open to me, what it does do, and what it does not and cannot do.

Having exhibited the part played by Religion in Civilization and Progress, I come next to the part played by Government. Now, as the form of government existing in any country should be in a general way the outcome and reflex of the intellectual, social, and material conditions of that country, it is evident that, *politically* speaking, all forms of government are alike good or bad according as they are well or ill adapted to the time or circumstances. But, *morally* and *socially* speaking, these different forms of government have the most widely different results. To exhibit these moral and social effects—and these, after all, are the essential elements in civilization—all forms of

government may for convenience be divided into two classes—the aristocratic and the democratic. The essence of Aristocracy is the *inequality* of men's material and social conditions, and includes all forms of despotism, imperialism, kingship, oligarchism, and the like, the essence of Democracy is the *equality* of men's material and social conditions, and includes, besides democracies pure and simple, all forms of Socialism that are of natural and spontaneous growth (and not mere paper utopias), and which are but the carrying of the principle of equality from the political sphere, still further into the material and social sphere. But to ensure the reader against the risk of being led into the region of misty, vague, and unprofitable speculations, and also to test the truth or falsehood of the doctrines enunciated by the touchstone of actual fact, I have exemplified the effects of Aristocracy and Democracy respectively by the existing condition of England and America, with just so much reference to other democracies of the ancient and modern world, as shall bring out aspects of political law not elsewhere to be seen. In doing this, I have endeavoured so to free the essential characteristics of Aristocracy and Democracy from the complications and illusions that obscure them, that the great laws of society may be clearly exposed. For just as the highest service the dramatist can render us is so to present a number of concrete men and women, variously related, and of different characters, that by their action and interaction on one another they may exhibit laws of the human mind, that shall be true of all men and in all times, so the highest problem of the political thinker is, from the relations existing between different concrete institutions and forms of government, and the character of the people living under them, to establish laws of such universality that, due allowance being made for compensating circumstances and conditions, they will account for the great characteristics of any nation and of any age.

The parts played in Civilization and Progress by Religion and Government having been determined, and the course of the

discussion having also brought out prominently the parts played by Science and Material and Social Conditions, it then becomes possible to treat of these great factors in *combination*. But before I can exhibit the laws that connect each of these factors with every other, so that the whole shall form the coherent unity called Civilization, which marches along the ages, and in its evolution throws off along its track the different special civilizations of the world, it is necessary to determine the *controlling* factor, the factor on which all the others depend, and from which they take their initiative and word of command; the factor, in a word, which must be practically addressed if civilization is to be advanced or retarded. This being determined, I shall then ask how this controlling factor must be affected to make each successive advance in civilization possible; and this in turn being answered, it will only remain to exhibit the way in which the different factors have acted and interacted on each other as they have come down through the long ages of the Past, and will continue to act and interact far into the unknown Future.

The reader may possibly have anticipated that the execution of a plan so wide and comprehensive would cover even a larger space than that which in this work I have given it. When a writer bases his theory of civilization on the alleged facts and details of history, rather than on the laws of the human mind, there is no doubt that bulk is indispensable, even inevitable; and in proportion to the reconditeness of the causes to which political and social phenomena are referred, and their remoteness from the ordinary motives that actuate human beings, must be the volume of evidence by which they are supported; as in the early Church, in proportion to the incredibility of the miracles recorded, were the clouds of witnesses by whom they were attested. Indeed, all theories of civilization that are wanting in that simplicity which characterises the primary motives and impulses of human nature, are liable to suspicion, and like the characters of persons whose actions are dark and

involved, must be reinforced by hosts of testimonials. But as the truths which I desire to enforce are founded not so much on the multiplicity of past events, with their fugitive and misleading lustres, as on the steady identity of human nature in all ages; not so much on the endless circumstantialities of History, as on universal principles of interpretation; not so much on external generalizations, as on the inner laws of the human mind; all undue bulk would be a weakness, like that excess of fat which is a sign of degeneration rather than of development, or that overgrowth of territory beyond the arm of the central power, which historians have noted as a real source of debility, and a sure precursor of decline. Accordingly, instead of inundating the reader with a flood of historical details, which fall from the mind like the filings from a magnet when the theory that gave them cohesion becomes discredited, and of adding thereby to the number of ponderous tomes, that, like the ruins of Roman aqueducts, have lain mouldering in sullen decay since the doctrines that gave them life have been superseded, I shall endeavour rather to compose my theory out of the simple impulses and laws of the human mind; filling in the canvas with pigments picked up here and there along the great highway of life, following in this, with humble step, the example set by the great Michael Angelo himself, who is said to have painted the walls of the Vatican with ochres dug from a garden at the back of the palace, careless of the source of his materials, so only that his pictures were intelligible, and bore the impress of truth.

PART I.—A NEW ORGANON.

CHAPTER I.

HISTORY—DESCRIPTIVE.

AT a time when not only the great crises of nations, but the minute and personal concerns of individuals, were believed to be under the immediate care and guidance of a Supreme Power, and human affairs were, in consequence, liable to *supernatural* interventions at every turn, no attempt was likely to be made to unite the Present with the Past by connected links of *natural* causation. History, accordingly, busied itself for the most part with the sayings and doings of those conspicuous personages whose sublime heads were regarded as the appointed channels by which the will of Heaven was to be transmitted to the great masses of men, lying passive and inert around the base of the social edifice. But, from the time that the procession of human events, like the movements of the stars, was suspected to lie under the dominion of fixed and inexorable laws, and ‘the people’ (hitherto believed to be as rooted and inanimate as that object on whose scaly rind Milton’s pilot moored), was discovered to be a Leviathan—a huge but inarticulate life stretching through the centuries, with impulse and motion inherent in itself—History entered on a new path, and announced itself as a new and sovereign power. Instead of dealing, as formerly, with the intrigues of princes and priests, with the rivalries of courts and camps, it set itself to follow and record the movements of that great world-stream of Humanity, on whose impetuous waters princes and potentates

were swept along, like straws on the surface of some dark unfathomed tide. In other words, as human affairs were gradually withdrawn from the interference of the Deity, and natural causes were invoked to explain them, men turned for the springs that moved events to the vast and complex structure of society itself; and History announced itself as the only sure ground on which to rest in any attempt to understand the Present or guide the Future. It was looked upon as an immense quarry, wherein were to be found, if assiduously explored, those secret links which, like the fossils of the geologist, would unite the present order of things with the remotest past; as a vast pyramid or mausoleum, whose inner recesses would, when unlocked, disclose the mighty figures that still work among us—‘those dead but sceptred sovereigns who still rule our spirits from their urns.’ So deeply, indeed, has this new-born conception penetrated the present age, that not a creed, institution, or shade of opinion but may be seen groping in the dark and unfathomed mines of history, seeking to connect its lineage with the extinct heroisms of other days. Here, for example, are a band of Christian believers digging at the root of the primitive tree, trying to square their doctrine and practice with the simplicity of the early times; there, a group of pale and eager figures bending over the great Protestant upheaval, intent on proving the legitimacy of their descent from the early ritual of the Reformation; and apart, unchanged while all around are changed, the undaunted forms of those who stand stern and inflexible on that primitive rock, against which it has been said the gates of hell cannot prevail. The torches of the politicians, too, are to be seen flitting here and there in the dusky labyrinths:—Radicals chanting dirges over the grave of Liberty, or invoking the shade of Pericles and the glories of departed Greece; Reactionaries under Carlyle, doing homage at the shrines of Cæsar and of Cromwell, and commemorating the brilliancies of the despotic *régimes*; Whigs keeping time to the music of Macaulay as

they march past the long line of monuments sacred to the memory of their once vital but now fast-decaying principles. There they all are, equally anxious to justify their claims to pre-eminence in the new and ever living Present, by connecting their lineage with the shadows and spectres of the Past. And not only these, but even popes and kings, who formerly held their haughty prerogatives in fief by the grace of God or divine right, are now obliged, like suppliants, to appeal in justification of their existence to the glorious role they have played in the past—their efforts in the cause of progress and civilization, their guardianship of national honor and prestige, their encouragement of literature and the arts and their care and tenderness for the elevation and amelioration of the masses. Nor is such an appeal altogether without reason. For just as the traditions which a man has inherited, the training he has undergone, and the circumstances and influences by which he has been moulded, leave their impress on his character, and are held as testimonial and guarantee of his present honor and integrity, so the historical antecedents of the current phases of life and opinion may be fairly adduced in support of their claims to the approval of mankind. But when such antecedents are made the ground of exclusive authority and pre-eminence, and each starts up in turn to assert itself as the leading thread in the vast complexity of causes at work in the past, we feel that the web is too heterogeneous—the threads too involved, to justify the assumption. The same may be urged against those philosophical historians who would refer the evolution of societies to the agency of a single principle, proximate or remote, such as climate, geological or meteorological phenomena—the ‘persistence of force’ and the like. Carlyle, who of all thinkers has perceived most clearly the unfathomed depths of mystery on which our little islet of knowledge swims, advises the historian to refrain from such attempts, as more worthy of an artisan than a true artist—and instead of fancying that he has exhausted

the infinite meanings of any transaction, to restrict himself to the more modest attempt of giving some faithful picture of it, deducing from it only such household truths as may prove valuable recipes in practice. Nevertheless, he, too, urges all men to search more and more into the Past, as 'it is the true fountain of knowledge, by whose light alone, whether consciously or unconsciously employed, can the Present or the Future be interpreted or guessed at.' Now, as this is precisely the point which I wish here to raise, and if possible to resolve, I shall for the sake of clearness consider History, first, as a mere record of events, and secondly, as a philosophical interpretation of them; and shall endeavour to trace the effects of each on a just insight into the Present or wise guidance of the Future.

Of late years the scattered records of dead and forgotten ages, dragged from the recesses in which they lay entombed by assiduous and indefatigable explorers, have been so ingeniously dovetailed and pieced together, that the Past, like some fossil mammal, stands reconstructed before us, and is open to the inspection alike of the curious, the contemplative, or the indifferent. Not only the great panorama of events, moving in vast perspective and outline along the ages, but the political, religious, and social life of the various peoples and nations, have been traced with fidelity by the historic pen; each link in the great chain of historical sequence having found its natural relations and connexions. We see the great monarchies of the East as they emerge large and indistinct on the far horizon, their vast and shadowy figures rising and falling in perpetual conflict, like a confused wrestle of giant spirits in the dawn. We see Persia returning triumphant from the struggle, and follow the movements of her gigantic despotism as, like some huge python, it rolls its slow and portentous bulk westwards to the sea, over whose sunny isles it hangs for a while dark and minatory, until Greece, startled by the impending danger, steps gaily out from beneath the oppressive

shadow, erect and defiant as a young Apollo, and with impetuous ardour buies the glowing shaft deep in its unwieldy side. Eastern barbarism rolled back for a while to its den, we watch with impassioned interest the rapid flowerage and culmination of Grecian glory, her noontide bulliance and dazzling elevation; and as she turns slowly to her setting, we linger over her departing splendour until, torn by dissension within and treachery without, she sinks fouled and bedraggled into the night. In the meantime, while the degenerate Greeks sit chattering in their dotage, unmindful of the glory of their sires, Macedon has arisen and asserted her supremacy over the whole peninsula. Holding in her leash the last remnants of Grecian patriotism, whipped from its torpor into fiery enthusiasm by the memory of happier days, we see her storming across the Hellespont, her legions mad with glory, into the heart of the prostrate East; and as she advances in her career of conquest, we see kingdoms and peoples fall successively before her, until her dominions stretch from sea to sea. But, long before the colossal fabric has had time to consolidate, dismemberment ensues, and the glory of her short-lived empire passes away, until at last the once mighty kingdoms of which she was composed, after here and there a spasmodic flicker of returning vigour, like the cottage lights of some peaceful hamlet in the evening, are one by one extinguished. For a power more stern and indomitable has arisen and is pushing onwards to universal dominion, disdainng to share with meaner rivals the empire of the world. While the crash of falling kingdoms is resounding in the ear, and the confused din of perpetual strife fills the air, the infant Rome, unheeded and in obscurity, is putting out her little feelers, and is seizing on such adjacent territory as lies within her reach. Growing by what she feeds upon, she gradually enlarges until she has covered the whole of Italy, and converted it into nutriment for herself. Centuries come and go, empires rise and fall, and many a bright promise has bloomed

and faded, but still she waves in bulk and vigour, until at last, like some mighty octopus, we see her embracing the world in her giant tentacles, and Gaul and Carthage, Persia and Egypt, Macedonia and Greece, have all alike gone down before her indomitable arms. But long ere the vast stretch of dominion has reached its utmost bounds, her vital organs, gorged to repletion, lose their vigour and are beginning to decay. Luxury and dissipation have taken the place of the early simplicity and frugality; intrigue and faction, of the old republican virtue; the pleasures of the circus, of the glories of the field. The ancient patriot is succeeded by the self-indulgent voluptuary; the ancient priest, by the winking augur; and the old Roman citizen, by the effeminate oriental and emancipated slave. And when at last civil war has precipitated its bloody round of proscription and atrocity, and the Republic, honey-combed to the heart by corruption, is about to collapse, the Empire arises to prop for a while the rotting edifice and stay its impending fall. But still the disintegration goes on. The army, grown omnipotent and dissolute, puts up the Empire to auction; and the favourites of the hour are borne in turn from the camp to the palace on shields dishonoured by treachery and stained by crime. Victorious generals returning in triumph from distant provinces make Rome the bloody arena wherein to contest their rival claims to the envied purple. Liberty is strangled, the voice of Freedom is hushed, and the bright scintillations of genius are extinguished in the thick and stifling air. Licentiousness and debauchery run riot, and their mad orgies are varied only by confiscations and crimes. While revelry holds its court at the capital, in the meantime around the vast ring of frontier the Barbarian sits squatting low and savage, and, as he presses in, his growl is heard from the outer darkness, like the confused rolling of the midnight sea. The provinces, crushed under the dead weight of civil and military officialism, that stretches like an iron network over the surface of the Empire, are impotent

for defence, resistance droops, the ramparts give way, and through the breach the thickening hordes pour like a scorching flood. The Empire, put on its defence, disperses or buys off the invaders, reconstructs its dikes, and retracts its limits but still the flood rolls in, until at last, subsidies and defeats proving alike unavailing, and even whole provinces thrown out to appease the fury and slacken the pursuit, the Empire goes down under the desolating tide. When we next catch sight of it after the waters have subsided, its vast system of centralization has fallen to pieces and disappeared, society has resolved itself into its primitive *cellules*, the old world-serpent has become a roll of sorted rings and Imperialism, after an abortive attempt to resuscitate itself in the West, passes into the feudalism with which modern civilization commences. The face of Europe is seen studded over with the castles of barbarian chieftains, around each of which, as a nucleus, runs a series of concentric circles of infeudation which radiate power and authority from the feudal lord himself, through successive rings of vassals and retainers, to the outermost ring of artificers and slaves. Christianity, meanwhile, has arisen, and become the religion of the Roman World. Dropped as a leaven into the fermenting heart of the Empire at the period of its greatest power, we see it at first working silently among the lowest sediment of the people—the cooks the cobblers, and slaves—then slowly rising, in spite of persecution, through the superincumbent layers of society, until it surges at last over the feet of the imperial throne. Returning thence, like a vivifying lava-stream, it spreads itself abroad on all sides, mingling with the currents of barbarian invaders that roll in successive tides over the empire, and converting them to itself, until it reaches the most secluded districts, and there silently extinguishes the last fires left slumbering on the neglected altars of Paganism. Accompanying it as it extends is the vast organization of the Church, which interweaves its golden threads everywhere through the

complex structure of society ; softening, by its creeds, charities, and chivalries, the harsh and cruel codes of the barbarian conquerors, and moderating the internecine feuds of their savage chieftains. While society is thus re-arranging itself in the West, the Crescent arises with its flaming propaganda, firing the sky like a comet, and after lopping off Africa and the East from the Empire and the Church, penetrates into Europe, and plants its standards at the very gates of Christendom. Repulsed and driven back to its native dominions, it continues to maintain, with varying success, the conquests it has achieved, until, with the somnolency of fate creeping over its decaying members, it relaxes into torpor, and finally sinks into impotent death. The West knit together again, by the whirlwind of religious fervour into which the Crusades have thrown the nations, Industry begins to appear, and Commerce cuts highways for itself over distant seas to the most inhospitable shores. The Serf, hitherto chained to the earth, gradually acquires property and even rights in the soil, shakes off his fetters, and ventures to lift his stooped and imbruted front to the light ; but his mind, enmeshed in a finer and more subtle despotism, is still enslaved, and awaits a happier day. The People, meanwhile, have gathered into towns and become powerful, and in return for services rendered are extorting charters of liberty from unwilling kings. The Nobility, once free as mountain eagles, but now ruined by Crusades or decimated by civil war, lose their authority, and are gradually reduced under the arm of the central power. And then, again, once more a new era of Cæsarism and Kingship arises for Europe, which here conspiring with the nobility against the people, and there depressing both alike, continues to exist, until the nations, stripped of the last vestige of political and social liberty, and ground by oppression to the dust, are awakened by the trumpet-blast of the French Revolution, and rise in terror and majesty to sweep the accursed thing away.

Such, in brief outline, is a rough general sketch of the great movements with which History has familiarised us, and the question becomes—What light does this, or the like of this, worked into minute or minuter detail, throw on the Present or the Future?

The Present is ever a mystery to us until it is irradiated by some knowledge of the Past. The glittering symbols we see around us—Church, School, Court, and Camp—seem to the unlettered, as they do to children, to be fixed and rooted in eternity, and to be as much a part of the economy of Nature as the sun, moon, and stars. But a glance along the perspective of history shows us that these, too, like the fleeting years, are evanescent and transitory, that Time changes, and will continue to change, their configuration and character; and that, as they sprang originally from the opinions, sentiments, and necessities of men, so they will fade and disappear with them.

History it is that traces the changes that institutions have undergone from their inception and starting-point down to our own time, and thus enables us to apprehend intelligently their present position and significance—saving us from the deception of appearances. Without History, indeed, it would be difficult to know whether the large and imposing organizations that confront us on every hand were gaining or losing ground; were waxing or waning; were rising in power or sinking in decay. The Catholic Church, for example, still stretches its vast network over Europe as it did in the palmiest days of the Papacy. How, then, can I tell whether it be a rising or declining power, but by tracing its history from the days when kings shuddered before its anathemas, to the time when, pressed by relentless foes on every side, and still fighting like a Parthian in its retreat, it finally yields to the enemy its last heritage of political power? Royalty is still surrounded with all the trappings of authority—with all the pomp and circumstance of state. To know whether it is in its prime, or its dotage, we must follow it from the time when it held,

in its single hand alone, each several rein of authority and power, to the time when, stripped one by one of its prerogatives, it at last becomes, as a political power, a myth and symbol merely. So, too, with the Aristocracy. They still retain unimpaired their dazzling supremacy of wealth and position, and still exist as a distinct and independent body in the State. It is only when we see that, after having been once the rivals of kings, they are now compelled to save themselves from political extinction by winking the eye, by ducking to let the wave pass over them, that we rightly apprehend their present position. The face of the Continent gleams with bristling bayonets, compacted into battalions larger and more menacing than any the world has seen. How then can I know whether Militaryism is gaining or losing ground in the world, but by a wide and comprehensive survey of its history from the earliest recorded times? The great body of the people still retain their ancient habits of deference and submission, and to all appearance are still in their pupillage. But, by following them from the time when they were still enslaved, down to the time when, shaking off their chains and coming to manhood, they set their feet on the necks of their former oppressors, we can the better estimate the present significance of Democracy.

In this way, History, by furnishing a larger base for observation and comparison, and by fixing the attention on deeper and more cardinal issues, enables us to apprehend intelligently the purport and significance of things around us. It enables us also, in a general sort of way, to forecast their future. For if, as many believe, the course of history is the most authoritative expression and revelation of the deep designs of the Creator, or, if you will, of the great central laws of the world, it is evident that, by following the tracks described by institutions in the past down to their meeting-points in the present, and thence prolonging them onwards according to the laws of their proper curves, we

may roughly determine their relative positions in the future. Some are moving in ascending lines, others in falling ones, some have short arcs, and will soon complete their cycles and disappear, while others, with vaster sweep, will prolong their influence far into the unknown future.

It is somewhat in this way that History, as a record of the Past, is believed to throw light on the Present and the Future. But a little consideration will show that, while it *accounts* for the Present, it does not really *explain* it, and, while it enables us in a way to *anticipate* the Future, it does not help us to *nudge* or *direct* it. We have just seen that History traces the institutions we see around us to their sources in the past, and follows them back again through all the windings of their progress and development to their condition at the present time. But as institutions have no merit in themselves, and are good and bad only in so far as they forward or impede the true well-being of man, it is evident that we cannot guide society aright until we know what their constant effects are—what constant relations they bear to the minds and characters of the people living under them. That they have effects of one kind or another is admitted. Some have a tendency to stimulate and expand the mental energies, others to repress or deaden them, and the aim of the statesman accordingly is to strengthen and uphold the one, to restrict or abolish the other. But before he can act wisely, he must first of all know what these effects are, as a physician must know the effects of his medicines before he can prescribe for the welfare of his patient. What we want, therefore, is not so much a knowledge of *how* institutions came here, as of their *effects* now that they are here, not History, but insight into *To-day*. Of what use is it to me to know how Slavery, for example, arose, spread and rooted itself in this or that country? What I want to know is its constant effect on the moral nature of man in every age and nation. Of what use is it to know how Christianity or Mohammedanism arose and struggled into supremacy in

this or that quarter of the world? What I want to know is the effect of these respective creeds on the populations living under their sway. Of what use is it to know the history of the long struggle between aristocracies and democracies, if we do not know the effects of their distinctive principles on the human mind, on its dignity or abasement, its expansion or repression, its fulness and spontaneity, or tameness and rigidity? It is clear, therefore, that, without a knowledge of the effects of institutions on human well-being—material, intellectual, and moral—we cannot wisely guide the Future. It is equally clear that, without such knowledge, we cannot understand the Present. To understand the Present, is to understand the opinions, sentiments, and beliefs of men in the Present; and for the great masses these are the direct results of the religions, creeds, and forms of government under which they live—in a word, of their institutions. Of course, the great moral and mental characteristics of any people are the combined results of many institutions. Nevertheless, it is evident that, until we can separate the effects that are attributable to each of these institutions, and that are inherent in their very nature, we cannot possibly understand the condition of a people in its *tout ensemble*.

History, then, as a mere record of the Past, can give us no insight into the Present, or guidance for the Future; such insight and guidance being got only from a systematic knowledge of the *effects* of institutions on human life and character. This knowledge, when attained, will constitute the Science of Politics—a science hitherto almost entirely neglected, only here and there an occasional explorer having ventured to sink a shaft in some outlying portion of the field. And, in passing, I may remark that such a science may lie midway between the general science of society, or Sociology, on the one hand, and what is called practical statesmanship on the other. Sociology interprets the movements of society as the results of some one law, as of Evolution, which is so general that, even if

it were true, it would be of little use for practical guidance. In this respect it bears the same relation to the special science of politics, that the general science of biology does to the special science of medicine. For, while the science of biology announces the general laws that are common to all animal organizations alike, it is incompetent to deal with those special complexities of the human body, and the diseases to which it is subject, which are the subject-matter of the science of medicine. So, too, with Sociology. It shows us the laws which societies in general follow, but does not enable us to guide any particular society to its true goal. It does not take into account the infinite variety of motives, interests, and beliefs which must be directed and combined before any society can enter on a higher stage but merely points to a fatality rolling through the ages, and making human beings its willing or unwilling ministers. Practical statesmanship, on the other hand, is a species of empiricism, and is too superficial and shortsighted to be depended on for future guidance and direction. Its method is to listen assiduously to the interests, wishes, and prejudices of the different classes in society, and, if possible, to estimate their relative force and volume (by the clamour which they raise in the Press and elsewhere), with the object of so apportioning legislative enactments as to satisfy at once the greatest number of interests. It does not attempt to estimate the consequences that will flow from the preponderance of any institution or set of beliefs, for, as has been well said, Jesus has no chance with Judas Iscariot unless he has the votes, but seeks merely to follow the wishes of those who for the moment have turned the balance of power in their favour. In this respect it resembles that empiricism in medical practice which instead of understanding the functions of the different organs of the body and their relations to each other, would, when the patient complains, simply clap a poultice on the seat of pain. Hence the necessity of a Science of Politics which shall trace the *effects* of creeds,

institutions, and forms of government, on human well-being; and, by indoctrinating the public mind with its principles, shall prepare the way for the practical statesman, who when the time is ripe will take them up, and devise the best means for giving them effect. Attempts have already been made, it is true, to reduce the effects of different institutions on *material* welfare to a systematic form, and the results constitute a part of the science of Political Economy. But the time has now arrived when their effects on the higher *moral* and *spiritual* life of nations should be investigated, and the results made a part of the consolidated knowledge of mankind.

It will be objected, doubtless, that institutions are as much the product of the thoughts and sentiments of men, as the thoughts and sentiments of men are the product of institutions; and that, in consequence, any attempt to formulate the effects of institutions on men, without taking into account the effects of men on institutions, must furnish us with data for insight and guidance at best partial and incomplete. Now, while I am willing to admit that institutions are as much the product and expression of men's sentiments and opinions, as men's sentiments and opinions are the product of institutions, I desire to point out that, for purposes of insight and guidance, there is this immense difference between them: that whereas the effects of institutions on men can be made the subject-matter of scientific investigation, the effects of men on institutions cannot be so made. It is true that we can to a large extent estimate the influence of great men on institutions of the past. We can trace the effects of Buddha, Mahomet, Cæsar, Luther, on the institutions which preceded them and under which they were born, and can follow the movements initiated by them, and extended by their disciples, until they modified or replaced the institutions of the earlier times. But we can no more predict the form in which the next Great Man will appear, or estimate the influence he will exert, than we can the next discovery in Science, or its application to the arts of life. The

influence of great men in the future cannot be foreseen, and cannot, therefore, be made the subject-matter of scientific enquiry. It must forever remain an unknown quantity in human affairs, not predicable, but only a hope, not a matter of insight, but of trust and aspiration, not of Science, but of Providence or Fate. And as for the great men of the past and their influence on the present, they are either already summed up and embodied in the institutions of the present (in which case their effects can be estimated like that of any other institution), or they are individual and personal influences merely, in which case they are *politically* non-existent. The influence of Christ, for example, and his effects on the welfare of men, are (in so far as he is a political power) embodied in the institution called the Christian Church, the influence of Augustine, Luther, Wesley and Knox, in the different branches of that church. In so far as they are merely personal and individual influences, they are not subject-matter of politics, which deals only with such sentiments and opinions as are mirrored and embodied in the institutions around us, and are held by great masses of men.

If of the two great influences then, that by their play and inter-action make up the movement of Civilization, viz, the action of institutions on men, and of men on institutions—the effects of men on institutions in the future cannot be now foreseen, or scientifically determined, the effects of men on institutions in the past are already represented by the institutions around us. Either way, therefore, their consideration can give us no insight into the present, or guidance for the future. But the effects of institutions on men, on the contrary, can be scientifically determined, and, when determined, like other laws of nature, hold good alike for the Present, Past, and Future. Accordingly, if we can determine the effects that institutions have over men's ways of thinking and acting at the present time, we may know that they have had the *same* effects in the remotest times, and can predict that they will have the

same effects in the next millennium. That the same institution should have the same effects in every age, although the effects of other institutions may overlay and obscure our perception of them, is indeed a very axiom of thought. It is *assumed* in all the efforts made to improve the welfare of man by legislation *i.e.*, by alterations in the institutions under which he lives. Without such assumption, all legislation were as uncertain and shifting as the winds. It may be objected that the effects of institutions on men cannot be reduced to a scientific statement, inasmuch as institutions which in one age have forwarded human development have in another age retarded it. It may be said, and with truth, that Militaryism, which once aided civilization, by welding small and heterogeneous tribes into large and powerful nations, now obstructs it; that Feudal Aristocracy, which in the middle ages was the only possible *regime* that could have held society together, is now opposed to the highest interests of the people—material, intellectual, moral; and that Slavery, which at one time helped civilization by releasing the more advanced races from the lower toils, thereby enabling them to pursue higher ends, has become (now that the dignity of man enters as a factor into political calculations) a curse to all engaged in it. All this may be readily admitted, and yet it does not prove that the same institutions have had *different* effects in different times and places. It only shows that political necessities have made these effects less urgent and important at one time than another. It is the same with nations as with individuals. For just as, when a man's life is in danger, the finer sentiments of his mind are for the moment less urgent than his self-preservation, so, in the earlier stages of society, material power and social order are of greater *relative* importance than those higher moral and spiritual interests which are the last achievement of civilization. But that the same institutions have had the same effects throughout is undoubted. Militaryism had the same effect in restricting the liberties of the individual, and making him a mere cog or pinion

in the State-machine, in the day when it was an essential element in civilization, as it has now, only, the liberty of the individual was then less urgent than the preservation of society or the aggrandisement and domination of the superior races. Feudal Aristocracy had the same effect in preventing the mental and moral expansion of the great body of the people in the Middle Ages, as it has to-day, only, at that time the dignity of seifs and utisans, the mental expansion of flunkies and valets, were of less consequence than the preservation of authority in innumerable centres of feudal power. Slavery has had the same effects on men in every age and country—only at one time it was considered more important that the few should be energetic, enlightened, and free, should civilize, colonize, and cultivate philosophy and the arts, than that a motley herd of barbarians, negroes, or orientals, although equal in the sight of God with their masters, should have equal justice, equal rights, equal chance of elevation and expansion of soul.

As a record of the past, then, History can give us none of that political insight and guidance which it arrogates to itself, none of that political wisdom of which it is believed to be the great repository, such insight and guidance being, as we have seen, the aim of that Science of Politics which has still to be inaugurated. We have now to inquire what help History gives us in our individual capacities as men who have lives to lead in the ever-new days that are dawning over us.

Carlyle has said that the choice of our Ideals is the most important step in life, Matthew Arnold, that Conduct is three-fourths of life, and Goethe that life is Action, and not Contemplation. Now, if we examine History, we shall find that, although it stimulates and exercises the emotions, it neither directs the imagination in the choice of the ideals we are to follow, the conscience in the principles of conduct we are to support, nor the reason in the line of action we are to pursue. There can be no doubt that, in reading the lives of the great

men who have made history illustrious, we are carried away by the virtue and character they exhibit—by their energy and perseverance under difficulties, their cheerfulness and stoicism in defeat, their moderation and humility in victory. What a fine bracing effect, for example, the old heroes of Plutarch have on the mind! What a thrill of admiration runs through the veins as we read of how no adversity could subdue their undaunted spirits, or dim their splendid magnanimity! But, unfortunately, the Past is not all a tale of ancient heroism. The ideals which it has bequeathed to us, though sometimes high and pure, are often false and hollow; and History, instead of perpetuating models of virtue, is too often the apotheosis of brute force or vulgar success. The consequence is that men's admirations as often settle on strong and unscrupulous characters, as on great and sublime ones. It is questionable, indeed, whether Bonaparte, for example, has not been as much an object of admiration, as the Apostle of the Gentiles himself. Certain it is that his career presents precisely those characteristics that are most attractive and alluring to the young ambitious mind: at that period of life, too, when it is most important that the ideals we select should be high and unalloyed. And thus, by presenting us with types of character that are maimed and imperfect, and erecting into objects of idolatry men of mixed and impure genius, History has as often served as precedent for gigantic crimes as for super-eminent virtues. It was the conquests of Alexander that fired the ambition of Napoleon, the dagger of Brutus that played before the fevered imagination of Charlotte Corday.

If History does not direct the imagination in its choice of ideals, neither does it give that support to the conscience which is so indispensable for present or future guidance. Instead of shining with a pure and steady lustre, its lights are frequently confused, uncertain, and misleading. Virtue and its reward, crime and its punishment—which ought to be linked together as by bands of iron—lie often so far apart, that their connexion

is not apparent, and, although the bonds exist, and the compensations are as sure as Nemesis, they are often as invisible and unsuspected as those hidden streams, whose secret currents connect the waters of distant lakes. So difficult, indeed, is it to track the path of Justice through the thickets of dishonesty and crime, that men at last have ceased to believe in its existence in this world, and special provision is accordingly made for its triumph in the next. They see virtue followed as often by a penalty as by a reward. George Washington may have been pardoned for cutting down the apple tree, because he would not tell a lie, but many a boy before and since has been thrashed for the same reason. For one man whom integrity and singleness of mind have raised on the golden wave of opportunity, to power and supremacy, thousands have gone to their graves, broken-hearted and in despair, the martyrs and victims of divine idlers quickened before their time, and plucked before their general ripening. These are truisms of History. And yet, so little have they availed to instruct us, that bigotry, persecution, and neglect devour their hecatombs of victims to-day as they did in the days of old. It is doubtless easy to sit and condemn the men who persecuted the inaugurators of the belief which we now love and cherish; but I do not find that the heralds of new thought fare any better to-day, or that history, which has taught us to beware of neglect and persecution in general, has helped us to avoid it in particular. Nothing is more wearisome than the lamentations we so constantly hear over the fate of Burns, for example, and the neglect he suffered at the hands of his contemporaries; and from men, too, who we perceive would act in the same way were he alive to-day. Not that men have ever wished to persecute the right, not that they wish to neglect merit, only they do not see that it is merit. And thus all right conduct in the present resolves itself into a matter of belief, opinion, knowledge, or, in other words, of insight into To-day.

And, lastly, History gives us no guidance in Action. If life

is work, and not passive enjoyment or barren contemplation, of what use can the records of ancient virtue or modern chivalry be to me, who have quite another set of problems to deal with, and which, from the nature of the case, must be without precedent? What insight or guidance does it give me to know what other men have done in other days and under other circumstances and conditions? For the question, after all, is not so much how we are to act in general, as what we are to do in particular. It is a matter not so much of right principles, which all admit, and which it needs no one to rise from the dead to enforce, as of knowledge of the conditions under which we live, and of the laws by which things are governed. It is doubtless true that Conduct is three-fourths of life, and that honesty and simplicity of character will carry a man through a great part of his perplexities. But it is equally true that the miseries, misunderstandings, and heart-burnings of the world, are as much due to bad judgments as to bad intentions, to differences of opinion as to differences of moral principle. For remedy, nothing will avail but insight into the conditions under which we work and live, into the connexion of causes and the course of events; and as the conditions are never twice alike, each emergency requires a different combination of thought and action to meet it. An American humorist has observed that because Benjamin Franklin began life as a tallow-chandler, and entered Philadelphia with half-a-loaf in his pocket, other boys were expected to do the same, if they ever hoped to rise in the world. The remark, though purposely exaggerated, sufficiently expresses a prevalent feeling. Scipio and Garibaldi were heroes and military men, Paul and Peter were apostles. Must I too become a military man or an apostle? The men whose lives we are asked to imitate were great, not because they followed the precedents of those that had gone before, but because they relied on themselves, looked into matters for themselves, and acted on insight into the immediate conditions under which they lived and worked. To follow precedent is not so much a

mark of true insight, as an indolent substitute for the want of it. Buonaparte himself, if he were to rise from his grave and follow his old tactics, would be a superannuation and a failure. To be a success, a man must conform to the existing conditions of success. Does he aim at being a business success? He must understand, not the state of trade in the last decade, but the relation of supply and demand to-day. A political success? Not the history of politics in the last century, but the wants and opinions of men in his own time. A literary power? Not the record of extinct theologies and philosophies, but the present aspirations, thoughts and sentiments of the great bulk of cultivated readers. Or does he reject entirely all the idols of the theatre, the market, and the den, and appeal to truths that are eternal and immortal? Thus, too, has its conditions which must be obeyed.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY—PHILOSOPHICAL.

IN the last chapter we considered History as a record and narrative of facts only. But it is usually more than a mere record. In the works of writers like Gibbon, Hume, Grote, Macaulay, Carlyle, the narrative is interwoven with philosophical and other reflections, which serve as bond and connecting link to the web and sequence of events; the problem of the historian being to find such causes, motives, and impulses, as shall be sufficient to explain the facts, and bind them into a complete and harmonious whole. If the motives and causes assigned are felt to spring naturally from the situation and character of the actors, we say the historian has given us a faithful account of the period he is recording; if not, we are dissatisfied, and pronounce his work a failure; as when a novelist, after laying down the ground-work of his characters, is unable to make them consistent or realisable. In other words, unless the causes assigned as adequate in the past, would be considered adequate to produce the same results in the present, we do not credit the representation. In a celebrated chapter of his great work, Gibbon has enumerated the causes which he deems sufficient to account for the spread of Christianity in the early ages. We ask ourselves whether the like causes would account for like facts, under like circumstances, to-day; and accept or reject his conclusions accordingly. Carlyle gives us what is called a 'new estimate' of Cromwell, and Froude of Henry VIII. We consider whether the estimates fit the facts according to the present laws of human nature, and so give or withhold our approbation. So that History, instead of throwing light on the Present, gets all the light it has to give from the Present;

instead of being the standpoint from which the present is to be interpreted and guided, the Present is the standpoint, and History but illustration and commentary merely. The neglect of this principle of interpretation has been the source of far-reaching errors in historians otherwise great and admirable. No historian, perhaps, has taken more pains to make his characters credible and consistent than Carlyle. He is constantly asking us whether we can believe that men like Cromwell, Frederick, or Mirabeau, who did such and such things under such and such circumstances, could have been the men they are usually represented to be, and tells us that if we cannot do so, we are bound to reject the representation. But he sometimes departs from this, his own, principle of judging the Past by the Present, and when he does so, he falls into those peculiar errors from which most of his political heresies have taken their rise. He was never weary, for instance, of prising what he called the beautiful relation that existed between lord and serf under the old feudal *regime*, and of holding it up as a kind of exemplar for our imitation and guidance at the present time. In this relation, he asserted, the lord, on the one hand, gave guidance and protection, the serf in return loyalty and obedience. Now, not only was this not true as an historical fact, except in the most mechanical sense, but no man can believe that it ever could have been the fact. If we consider the relation in its effects on the heart (and this, indeed, was Carlyle's chief concern), instead of being beautiful, it was absolutely demoralising. Although the serf may have given loyalty and obedience—for there is no power so base and oppressive but will be revered by those who suffer from it—the lord, in return, regarded the serf as little better than a beast of the field, and treated him accordingly. As for the protection he afforded the serf, it was simply a piece of mutually-advantageous self-interest, while the guidance he gave him eventuated in that brutal ignorance in which he has lain until our own time. Carlyle would not, of course, have the identical relation repeated

in the present day ; he would put a hero in the place of a lord, and the people in general in the place of a herd of serfs. But the upshot would be the same while the relationship continued, were it even to the end of time—on the one hand a nation of flunkeys, and on the other, a tyrant who would treat them as slaves. This result inheres in the very essence of the relation, and must reappear under like conditions in every age and nation. No history, groping among the dead rubbish-heaps of the Past, can obliterate this pregnant truth drawn from a just insight into To-day.

But how, it may be asked, are we to interpret the Past from the Present, if there are no institutions in the present answering to those in the past? We have no serfs, for example, in England at the present time, how then are we to understand a state of society of which they were a component element? The answer is—by *analogy*, by looking at the essence of the relation. Between a modern master and his lackeys and dependents, the same essential relation subsists as between the lord and the serf of feudal times. If we realise to ourselves the full round of this relationship, deepen the shades to correspond with the more absolute power possessed by a lord in early times, allow for a more aristocratic state of opinion and belief, the result will be the solution desired. This method of interpreting the Past from the Present has been followed by Shakspeare in his great historical dramas, with such success as we all know. He wishes, for example, to give us a picture of old Roman times. He gets from Plutarch and other sources the broad historical facts, the form of government and religion, the distribution of power and authority ; this is the skeleton to which he has to give life and reality. How does he proceed? He simply takes his stand on the times in which he himself lived ; notes the effects existing institutions have on his own and other minds ; allows for the differences in custom, mode of life, and political and religious forms ; and the result is a drama or dramas more real and lifelike, more true and believable, an insight into the working

of Roman life more subtle and profound, than all the husks with which the historians have furnished us. Instead of History giving us any insight into To-day, it is only our insight into To-day that can make the old dead bones of History live.

I am aware that there are a certain number of generalizations which are supposed to be the peculiar products of History, and which, whether for warning or encouragement, have a mystic sanctity attached to them quite out of proportion to their real value. These teachings of History, as they are called, include, among the rest, such well-worn platitudes as that luxury is the cause of decline in States, that the license of democracies ends in despotism, and that the first breath of liberty, instead of appearing discontent, excites it. Now, whatever truth there may be in these generalities, our belief in them is no more due to the teachings of History, than our belief that two and two make four is due to the teaching of History. Were they not seen to hold true at the present time, to say that History affirmed them would have about as much weight as to say that, because History affirmed it, two and two make five. We believe luxury to be the forerunner of decline, not because History affirms the sequence, but because we see to-day that luxury tends to selfishness, isolation, and enervation, and that these relax those social bonds without which a nation cannot subsist. We believe the license of democracies will end in despotism, not because a number of historical facts support the induction, but because we perceive that license breeds disorder, and out of disorder order can come only by supreme power being placed for the time in the hands of some one individual. We cannot, of course, make as many direct observations as we should wish on the relations between the fall of States and their political antecedents. We cannot have empires and kingdoms falling to pieces every day before our eyes to serve merely as crucial experiments for our political inductions. We are obliged, accordingly, to draw on the Past for such

historical sequences as shall supplement the want of direct observation, and shall illustrate and enforce our political convictions. And it is precisely here that History is of service. Not that it teaches us anything new, but that it strengthens the convictions we have already formed from observation of the Present, by furnishing us with evidence of their truth in times gone by. It gives us the same sort of assurance as if we had discovered the account of an ancient eclipse in some old forgotten book, after having read that its exact time had been calculated by astronomers of our own day. It does for mankind what the experience of other minds does for the individual. The greater part of our knowledge is got by proxy, and not by direct experience. It is largely drawn from the reports of reliable contemporaries, or from the books and conversation of eye-witnesses. Nevertheless, we believe and act on the information received, not because the authority is infallible, but because it runs in accord with our other beliefs, or at least does no violence to them. I can believe in events I have not witnessed, in crimes I have not committed, not because the testimony is unimpeachable, but because it corresponds to tendencies which I feel in myself, or see in the world around me. I can believe in a man killing his neighbour in a passion although I have never witnessed it, because I can realise the extent to which passion will go when unchecked by higher considerations. So, too, with History. It supplies the present age with experience of former ages, and so gives assurance that those results have actually happened which we should have been led to expect from tendencies visible in our own time. But the conclusions drawn from it must be credible to us now, or were a messenger sent from Heaven to announce them we should not believe him. And thus it is that the fraction of eternity known as To-day, will, if rightly seen, balance the whole of recorded history, as easily as a drop of water, when rightly placed, will balance the sea.

That History gets all its credence from insight into To-day

appears in nothing more clearly than in the decay into which the old belief in miracles has fallen in the present age. The historical facts which support the belief still exist as they did in the Middle Ages, and are as much a part of well-authenticated history as any other transaction. Why, then, are they not believed in now as they were formerly? Simply because History gets all its authority from insight into the present world, and not from the credibility of witnesses, however trustworthy. In the days when miracles in *general* were believed in, that is to say, in the days when the interposition of supernatural agents in human affairs was believed in, any *special* set of miracles was of course *a priori* credible. But, to day no supernatural agencies whatever are believed to interpose in human affairs and consequently accounts of miracles no matter by what authority attested, are almost entirely discredited. The reason why supernatural agents were formerly believed to interpose in human affairs, was simply because events were constantly happening on every side which could not in the then state of knowledge, be explained by natural causes, and that, consequently, by the profoundest law of human nature, men were bound to attribute to wills like their own what could not be referred to known natural agencies. The reason, on the other hand, why we do not now believe in supernatural interpositions, is simply because all events whatever are believed to be traceable to natural cause, time and observation alone being wanting to make out the more subtle and recondite connexions. It is the same with the belief in witchcraft as with the belief in miracles. The evidence in its favour was strong and convincing. Some of the greatest names in the past firmly believed in it—Bacon, Matthew Hale, Sir Thomas Brown. To men of such penetration the evidence seemed sufficient to justify the belief, simply because they came to the examination of the facts with minds already prepared for such interpretations. They saw events occurring around them every day which nothing but the supposition of invisible wills like their own could explain.

Hence, evidence which would have been rejected by us was deemed sufficient by them. But why multiply instances? If further proof were wanting that History is but an appendage and illustration of the Present, and must be sternly subordinated to it, it is to be found in the broad general truth that all knowledge whatever is judged from the standpoint of the Present, and not from the standpoint of the Past. We do not judge of the nature of comets, for example, by the accounts History gives of them when they were believed to 'shake from their horrid hair pestilence and war,' but we judge of their effects *then* by what we know of their nature *now*. We do not judge of ancient maladies from the accounts of ancient writers, but from our present knowledge of disease; even the theologians venturing timidly to hint that those who were said to be possessed of devils were, after all, only the victims of epilepsy. We do not believe that the thunder was the voice of Jove, or the lightning his thunderbolt. In short, all old interpretations must give way to the new; the Past must be postponed to the Present; and Science, while pronouncing on all that has gone before, is itself unjudged, save from the higher standpoints to be reached in the future.

To give greater completeness to the subject, we have still to consider History as a *philosophical* interpretation of the Past, and to enquire what light it throws on the Present or the Future. It has been often remarked that History may be so read as to support any belief or system of thought; and, indeed, if we consider the number of contradictory theories to which it has lent its aid, there would seem to be a good deal of truth in the imputation. I have noticed that those theories of the World or of Society which profess to rest on a wide induction of historical facts, carry much greater weight in the public mind, than those that stand, unsupported, on direct insight into things around us. The bulk and pretentiousness act on the imagination, as a Lord-Mayor's show on nursery-maids and children, and mightily enhance the dignity and weight of the

argument. When we read Comte, or Buckle, or Spencer, and their respective accounts of the progress of civilization, we imagine that the theories they are seeking to establish have arisen in their own minds, out of the facts presented, as easily and naturally as they do in their books. We are accordingly lost in admiration at the grasp of intellect that can survey, like a God, in one vast picture and perspective, the whole movement of humanity; the eye is dazzled, and loses its sense of proportion; and the imagination, crushed like an Enceladus under a mountain of tradition and authority, is paralyzed and unable to stir. But the more penetrating minds perceive that the theory, instead of flowing spontaneously *from* the facts, has really been projected *into* them, only such facts being adduced as run in accord with it; and that the great draughts swept into the net, have been as carefully selected beforehand, as those fish which Anthony drew from the sea with such *éclat*, but which Cleopatra discovered to have been put on by boys paid to descend for the purpose. Instead of the theory being, as is supposed, the concentrated result and product of the author's reading, the reading has been an elaborate search for facts to support the theory. Instead of having been drawn from a vast array of historical facts, the theory has really been drawn from a limited observation of men and things around; and is usually either the development of some striking generalization of outer facts, or the expansion of some pregnant law of the human mind. The consequence is, that it has no force over and above the limited range of facts from which it was drawn in the first instance; as the complicated machinery of a mill has no power over and above the simple motor by which it is turned. Spencer, for example, admits that his theory of Evolution which appears to the reader as if it had unfolded itself in the most natural and spontaneous manner from the facts detailed, was really suggested by a striking observation of Von Baer to the effect that organisms in their development pass from a homogeneous to a heterogeneous condition. This

generalization seemed to crystallize and unite into a harmonious whole, many observations already made by Spencer himself in different fields of scientific research. Accordingly, after giving the generalization a more precise and definite form, he ranges systematically with it through the different classes of scientific facts, and finds that it is the law which they all obey. All this is, of course, quite legitimate, seeing that the facts of science are objective realities which exist to-day and are open to examination and inspection. But when he ascends the stream of existence to its source, and undertakes to show how things *arose* (and, indeed, it is this that gives bulk to his volumes), his *special* interpretations have no more value than the *general* theory they are intended to illustrate. For example, he undertakes to show us the origin of life, of species, of the nervous system; of our ideas of time and space; of the conscience; of the sense of beauty, sublimity, and virtue; of societies, religions, and forms of government; and all on the theory of Evolution; going so far even as to have his sociological facts collected by proxy in support and verification of the hypothesis. Now, seeing that the origin of things lies quite beyond our observation, being buried in the recesses of the past, it is clear that his explanations only go to show how things might have arisen if the theory of Evolution were true, not how they actually have arisen. Whether the theory of Evolution is itself to be regarded as true or false, will depend not so much on how far it will explain the illusory phenomena of the *past*, as how far it will explain the phenomena that lie around us in the *present*. The consequence is that any disparagement thrown on the theory by the evidence of facts adverse to it in the present hour, would blow to the winds all the long years of toil spent on uncertain or fantastic speculations. Indeed, if one known fact could be distinctly adduced to negative the *general* theory, the whole body and superstructure of *special* interpretations and explanations would fall to the ground. I do not wish in these remarks, to disparage the great ingenuity

and subtlety shown by Spencer, still less to deny his great contributions to thought, his original glances into things, and the many and various fields of speculation he has opened up. I merely desire to point out, that all philosophical interpretations of the Past whatsoever (and especially in the domain of History), instead of throwing light on the Present, get all their light from the Present; and are to be considered just and reliable, in proportion as the insight they exhibit into the Present is deep, exact, and comprehensive. It is the same with Comte's Philosophy of History. He declares that his Law of the Three Stages through which Humanity has passed—the Theological, the Metaphysical, and the Positive—was drawn entirely from a survey of the historical facts. But if you will look closely, you will find that (more or less unconsciously to himself) it was really drawn as a corollary from a Law of the Human Mind—the Law, viz, that in proportion as natural causes are unknown, events are attributed to wills like our own; and moreover, that it is his belief in the truth of this law which makes him so firm in his conviction that his reading of History is the only true and scientific one. And as he makes not only Religion, but also Practical Life turn on this law, the whole of History thus becomes the corollary of a law of the human mind, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. I cannot, of course, enter here into any discussion as to the amount of truth there may be in this law, or the extent to which it is applicable to societies, I only remark, that if it can be shown to be limited in its range, partially operative, or restricted to a particular sphere, any reading of History, founded on it alone, must be proportionately narrow, one-sided, and incomplete.

On all hands, then, it is evident that History can give us no insight into the Present, but that it is insight into the Present that gives to History all that it has of truth or consistency. Of what use are the laborious accumulations of historical details piled up by Montequieu, in support of his

theory that Climate is the prime cause of the difference between nations, in power and energy, in customs and forms of government, when our own experience teaches us that climate, although a factor in social phenomena, is after all only a factor of subordinate importance? What has it availed Buckle that he should have spent years in ransacking the libraries of the world in support of his theory that man is the slave of circumstances, when every day shows us that circumstances are as often the slaves of men, as men are the slaves of circumstances? What has it availed Carlyle that he should have spent his long life wrestling with Dryasdusts in dreary despair, wringing history and biography to prove that Hero-worship is the eternal adamantine rock on which alone nations can rest secure, when we see every day, that, while it deifies the hero, it degrades the worshipper, and that, while it sometimes gives rise to a beautiful spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice, it more frequently ends in flunkeyism and meanness of soul?

‘Be lord of a day by wisdom and virtue and you may put up your history-books.’

CHAPTER III.

METAPHYSICS.

IN the preceding chapter we entered on an examination of History, with the view of determining scientifically what light it threw on the Present and the Future: and as the result of that examination we found that in neither of its three great divisions—neither as a mere record and narrative of transactions, such as is found in ordinary history-books, nor as an interweaving and connecting of these with their immediate and special causes, as in the writings of Gibbon, Grote, and Macaulay, nor yet again as a full and all-round interpretation of them, as in Buckle, Comte, and Spencer—did it give us any real insight into the Present, but that, on the contrary, it was insight into the Present that gave to the Past and the theories with which it is overlaid, all the value and credibility they possess for us; thus degrading History as an instrument of knowledge into commentary, illustration, and appendage merely. Now, as the main object of this work is to determine, in as scientific a way as possible, the great laws of the human mind on which religions are constructed, and along the lines of which they are evolved, and the parts played in human life by Religion, Government, and Material and Social Conditions respectively, with the view of exhibiting the way in which these great factors have acted and interacted on each other to produce the complex phenomena of Civilization and Progress, it now becomes necessary to enquire what is the special nature of that insight into the Present, so indispensable for the solution of these great and important problems. And so, running our minds over the different departments of thought, we shall find that, leaving out History and Sociology which we

have seen to be unsuited for our present enterprise, the various recognized instruments of knowledge may all be reduced to four—Physical Science, Political Economy, Metaphysics and the modern science of Psychology. In the present chapter, accordingly, I propose to enquire briefly whether, and to what extent, any of the methods employed in these various departments of thought will furnish us with what we require.

Of the Physical and Natural Sciences, with their Baconian methods of observation and experiment, little, indeed, need be said. A glance through the pages of Tyndall, Huxley, or Darwin, will show that they deal entirely with physical and material things, and do not touch upon those laws of the mental and spiritual world on which, as I shall endeavour to show, religions are constructed, and along the lines of which they are evolved. No one can be more convinced than myself of the profound influence exerted over the old religious beliefs—the six days' creation, fall of man, and the consequent atonement and redemption—by the discoveries of modern Science as to the position of Man in the universe, the age of the world, and the mode of evolution of the animals and plants covering its surface; and no one can be more alive to the extent to which the evolution of religions is modified by the physical sciences generally. But the object of my enquiries is to find, not what are the *facts* or *truths* of the external world by which religions are or have been modified, but what are the *laws* of the human mind which determine that modification. Religion deals with the thoughts and feelings of the mind; Physical Science with the changes and movements of matter. And just as the changes in the world of matter follow some law of physics, so the changes in the moral and spiritual world may be expected to follow some law of mind. It is evident that the method of external observation and experiment by which the laws of the evolution of matter are determined, cannot be the method by which the laws of the evolution of religions are to be discovered, and that, therefore, the Physical Sciences

cannot furnish us with the organon we require. I am, of course, aware that the physical science of Biology deals, among other things, with the relation existing between the mind and the brain and nervous system, and thereby indirectly establishes a connexion between things mental and things material. But, as this connexion is the basis of the modern science of Psychology, I prefer rather to treat of it under that heading, and so shall postpone all further remarks on it until we arrive at the section dealing with that science.

Of Political Economy, too, a few remarks will suffice. If we run through the pages of Mill or Adam Smith, for example, we shall find that these representative writers deal entirely with the laws that regulate the production and distribution of the material commodity, Wealth, but have nothing to say as to the effects of the different modes of distribution of this commodity on the moral and spiritual nature of man. If the land of a country, for example, is held in a few hands, and kept from dispersion by obstructive laws of entail and settlement of great stringency, and if, further, industry and population have grown up on this basis and adapted themselves to it, Political Economy will step in and undertake to show you the laws by which the relative amount of wealth that shall fall to the land lord, the capitalist and the labourer respectively shall be regulated, and with that its function ends. I, on the contrary, propose to begin where Political Economy leaves off, and, assuming this particular arrangement of property and industry, shall endeavour to show what effect it, and the aristocratic *regime* that springs naturally out of it, has on the body of the people living under it—on their culture, their aspirations, their sentiments, and habits of thought. In like manner, too, I propose to deal with the effects on the human mind of that wide and general equality in the distribution of wealth which is the basis of Democracy. It is evident that the science which deals with the laws that regulate the production and distribution of the material commodity, wealth, cannot furnish us with the

organon necessary to determine the laws which regulate the *effects* of that distribution on the minds and characters of men.

History, the Physical Sciences, and Political Economy, being thus thrown out as unable to furnish us with the organon or instrument of investigation we require, I come now to Metaphysics; and, as the subject is intricate, thorny, and notoriously beset with pitfalls, it will behove me to pick my steps with caution. For my own part, I must frankly say, at the outset, that Metaphysics has long ceased to have any influence on my own speculations; and that neither directly or indirectly have its results been involved in the conclusions which it is the object of this work to enforce. In saying this, I, of course, speak of Metaphysics in its old sense—the sense in which the term was used before the science of Biology had established those definite connections between the mind and the material organ of the brain, the discovery of which has had in many ways such important consequences, and (as embodied in the modern science of Psychology) has almost entirely superseded the old Metaphysics. Now, in order to make clear to myself why a subject so vague and diffuse as Metaphysics, should at no point of its compass have come in contact with questions so wide and general as those to be hereinafter discussed, I have thought it expedient to go through once again some of the standard works on the subject—Locke, Hume, Kant, Mill, and others—with the object of determining why its problems and results have been of so little use to me. And, accordingly, on gathering up my impressions, I find that Metaphysics either deals with mere *words*, *unrealities*, or *fictions*, and therefore can be of no use in dealing with *facts*, *realities*, and *things*; or else it stops with the mere *analysis* of our mental faculties, and therefore can no more give us a knowledge of the truths that are to be seen by these faculties, than an analysis of the structure of the eye can give us a knowledge of the things that are to be seen by the eye. In order to justify my first contention, viz., that Metaphysics deals with mere words and

unrealities, I propose to select a few instances, which the reader will see to be typical of a large section of the problems which it undertakes to resolve. My first illustration will be taken from the boundless desert of Theological Metaphysics; and my endeavour will be to show not only that these discussions deal with words and unrealities merely, but to point out the way in which the Metaphysicians, having first deceived themselves, have also deceived others.

If we look around us, we see, on the one hand, physical objects of all shapes, sizes, colours, weights, motions, and temperatures, and, on the other, mental attributes, passions, sentiments, desires, thoughts, of all degrees of power, fineness, and quality. When we have ourselves seen any particular object of a given class—animal or tree—or come in contact with any particular phase of character or disposition, we can afterwards, by the simple act of memory, recall it with more or less vividness and accuracy, and even to a large extent can base our judgments on it with safety. But if we desire to convey an adequate idea of the object to those who have not seen it, we cannot do so by directly calling up an image of it, for that they have not got. We are obliged, therefore, to do it indirectly by means of something of which they have a definite idea; and what more natural than to make use of that *average* or typical specimen of the class with which everybody is supposed to be familiar. If I wish, for example, to describe a man whom you have not seen, I say he is tall or he is short, meaning thereby that he is above or below that average height of man of which most people have a distinct image. In like manner we speak of an object as hot or cold, light or dark, coarse or fine, ugly or beautiful, good or bad, and the like. And as the very conception of an average is that it is a mean between *two* opposite extremes, it follows that in all visible, tangible, or otherwise representable objects or attributes within the domain of experience, what are called correlatives—such, for example, as thick and thin, long and short, hot and cold,

upper and under, east and west—*necessarily* involve one another, just as one end of a stick necessarily involves another end. Now this necessity of thought by which correlatives involve one another, owing to their tacit reference to some average or central point which *must* have an extreme on each side of it, is, you will observe, purely confined to the realm of experience from which it is originally derived, and does not legitimately hold beyond. But the Metaphysicians, seizing on the phrase ‘correlatives necessarily involve each other,’ as if it were an axiom of thought, proceed straightway to give it a universal application, and so not only walk unconsciously into a mere word-trap themselves, but lead the flocks who follow them, into it also. Because long *necessarily* involves short, thick thin, hot cold, good bad, they imagine that finite must *necessarily* involve infinite; entity, non-entity; temporal, eternal; and what they call the relative, or that which exists in relation to other things, the absolute, or that which exists out of relation to all things; not perceiving that in doing this they have overstept the boundary line within which the generalization that ‘correlatives necessarily involve each other’ holds good, viz., the sphere of experience. For what experience can I have of the infinite or the eternal, of non-entity, or of an absolute out of all relation to everything, even to me myself? None whatever. And what average or middle point can there be between the finite and the infinite, between the relative and the absolute, between entity and non-entity, between temporal and eternal, by reason of which the one must necessarily involve the other? There can be none. It is evident, therefore, when we come to consider it, that the finite does not *necessarily* involve the infinite; entity, non-entity; the relative, the absolute; the temporal, the eternal. And thus the metaphysicians, in lifting the generalization that correlatives necessarily involve each other from the solid ground of experience, which is its natural basis, to the cloud-land of mere words, have been dealing with phantasms and

symbols that have no real existence and, while imagining themselves to be 'walking on *terra firma*, have really been ballooning in a world of unreality and dreams. And, after all, with what result? With none whatever, except to have set the world wrangling over contradictions that have made Religion a stumbling-block to the thoughtful, a mystery passing comprehension to the vulgar. It is this Theological Metaphysics that has given rise to such enigmas as—how can a God, infinite in power and goodness, permit evil? how can infinite justice consist with infinite mercy? and the like—before which the wisest can only stand bewildered and answer—how? And yet if we use the words infinite, eternal, absolute, in their *natural*, and not in this verbal *metaphysical* sense, the contradictions will fall away of themselves. When we say that an emperor is absolute, we do not mean that he is out of all relation to his subjects, but simply that, while they depend on him, he does not depend on them. When we say that Shakespeare is infinite in invention, we do not use the word in its merely verbal sense, we do not mean that his invention is absolutely infinite, but only within the range of human experience. And in like manner, if we use the terms infinite, absolute, and the like, in reference to God, in their natural and not merely verbal sense, there will be no contradiction to clear away. Precisely the same wrangling and contradictions have arisen over the metaphysical doctrine of the Trinity, of the Three in One and One in Three, and for precisely the same reasons. But of this enough. I would only remark, as the most curious circumstance of all, that when the Metaphysicians have thus tracked their fictions on to the nature of God, they then turn round and proceed to abuse the human understanding for not being able to fathom the contradictions which they themselves have created, and for which they alone are responsible. Dean Mansel, for example, seriously asks you whether it does not pass human understanding that infinite power and goodness should permit evil that infinite justice is

compatible with infinite mercy ; and, having candidly admitted that it does, becomes almost triumphant over the fact ; urging it as an instance of the weakness of human reason, and of the consequent necessity for a Revelation to disclose those things which, being beyond our comprehension, must be taken on trust alone. It was this constructing a God with metaphysical attributes, and then trying to look at the world through the eyes of the metaphysical illusion they had created, and to coerce Nature and humanity into accord with it, that gave rise to the doctrine of Predestination and the exploded Calvinisms of other days. God, being infinite in knowledge, must have foreseen everything that would occur ; and, not being like the gods of Epicurus, who reigned but did not govern, must have fore-ordained the greater number of human souls to everlasting perdition—a pretty consummation to which Metaphysics has brought us ! The truth is, that had not the great masses of men (and these it is who have kept up the religions of the world) had a healthy contempt for Metaphysics—with its infinites, and absolutes, and threes in one and one in threes—had they not, when forced to listen to such metaphysical word-play, put their own natural and human, and not metaphysical, construction upon it ; had they not, when they heard God spoken of as *infinite* in power, goodness, justice, and the like, interpreted these phrases to mean what *they* meant, viz., the idealization and highest expression of attributes within their conception, Religion must have long since gone to wreck from internal and inherent contradictions.

The above are a few instances of the wordy unrealities and fictions with which Metaphysics has occupied itself throughout that large section of its domain covered by Theology. The remainder of the ground occupied by Metaphysics is devoted to the analysis of the various faculties and functions of the mind, and the decomposition of these into their primary and constituent elements ; and here, too, a few illustrations will show us that this can no more give us a knowledge of the truths

that are to be seen by these faculties, than an analysis of the structure of the eye can give us a knowledge of the things that are to be seen by the eye.

We are at all hours of the day forming judgments of one kind or another on the events going on around us; adding to our knowledge of men and things, and going through processes of reasoning as to the contingencies and probabilities of life. Now, if we take up the works of the professed Metaphysicians, such as Locke and Hume and Kant, we shall find that, instead of telling us what judgments under any given circumstances and conditions men will necessarily form on any concrete human thing about them, or furnishing us with reasons for or against any particular course of action or conduct, they confine themselves entirely to telling us in what the mental act of judgment consists, what constitutes the reasoning process, or how a piece of organized knowledge is made possible at all. Locke, for example, who figures the mind as like a piece of white paper on which the impressions that come to us through the senses write themselves directly as they are, without any change, regards a judgment, a reason, or a piece of knowledge, as simply the indilferent scrawlings of these successive experiences, more or less sorted perhaps by some kind of vague affinity or principle of association. Kant, on the other hand, contends that the unity which characterizes a definite judgment or piece of knowledge, could not arise directly from the *separate* and isolated impressions furnished by the senses, but that, on the contrary, just as in a carding-machine between the raw material of wool that goes in at one end, and the continuous and definite thread of yarn that comes out at the other, there must be interposed a series of cylinders and wheels and grooves which work the separate pieces into a single thread, so between the raw material of knowledge that goes in by the senses and the formed judgments and reasons that issue from the mind, there must be interposed a number of grooves or 'categories,' as he calls them—time, space, cause and effect, and the like—in the mind,

which must be impressed on our sensations before they can become perceptions, judgments, reasons, knowledge. It is the same with our beliefs, and the assents we give to truths of various kinds. The Metaphysician does not, as such, profess to tell us what, under given circumstances, men will believe about any concrete human interest whatever—any religion, institution, form of government, state of society—or how they were produced: he does not tell us to what propositions we shall give our assent, or from what we shall withhold it, but merely discusses in what the mental act of belief or assent consists; Locke holding that the degree of belief or assent we give to any proposition is strictly proportioned to the probabilities in its favour, and the evidence by which it is supported; while Cardinal Newman contends, on the contrary, that there are no degrees to a man's assent, and that it may be often yielded when the reasons adduced for the belief would be far from carrying conviction to another's mind.

But, besides the judgments, the beliefs, the reasoning processes on every variety of topic, that make up so much of our life, we are the subjects of feelings, sentiments, passions, desires, and aspirations, which ever and anon cross the current of our thoughts, diverting them in an easy unconscious way into their own channels, or concentrating them fixedly on some special object. There is the feeling of love, for example, which plays so large a part in human life, and is so pregnant with important issues; the feeling of duty, so essential to individual and social well-being; the feelings of benevolence, reverence, mercy, pity, and the like. On these, too, as on the intellectual faculties proper, the Metaphysicians set to work with their scalpels to dissect and analyse them into their constituent elements; disputing as to which are to be set aside as simple and ultimate, and which are further resolvable into modes of pleasure and pain, of self-interest, self-love, expediency and the like. And, lastly, the Metaphysicians have put the Will under the microscope, and, as we all know, have filled the libraries of the world with

their endless discussions as to its nature, what it is in itself, and whether it is really or only apparently free

The above are examples of the questions with which all Metaphysics outside the range of Theology are concerned, and it will I think, be evident, without further comment, that their results however useful in themselves, can be of no service for my present purpose as no explanation or analysis, however ultimate and complete, of what a judgment is what a reason is, what a belief is, or of what love is, duty is hope is, will is, can throw the least light on what, under given circumstances, a man will believe, will consider his duty to be, and will consequently do. And as each and every concrete religion of the world has prescribed more or less definitely and minutely to its votaries the number and character of the deities they are to believe in the propositions they are to hold about the nature and attributes of these deities, who and what they are to love and revere, what they must will to do or avoid, what they are to fear, and what they are to hope for, it is evident that Metaphysics, in so far as it is engaged in isolating the different faculties, feelings, and sentiments of the mind, and analysing them into their constituent elements, can throw no light whatever on the origin of these concrete religions, on the great laws on which they are constructed, and along which they are evolved, and on the part they play in civilization and progress, and so cannot supply us with the organon or instrument we require

Before leaving the subject of Metaphysics however, I desire to remark that the question as to whether Metaphysics has played any positive part in advancing knowledge, whether and in what way its results have modified our views of the world and of human life, I shall postpone until I have considered the value for my purposes of the modern science of Psychology, to which I shall now address my self.

CHAPTER IV.

PSYCHOLOGY.

WITHIN the last fifty years the science of Biology has made gigantic strides, and among other things the connexion between the brain and the mind, based on an immense induction of observation and experiment, has been shown to be so minute and exact, that the conclusions drawn from the truth of this connexion have profoundly modified the old systems of Metaphysics, if, indeed, they have not altogether superseded them. While the Metaphysicians of the old school have gone on tumbling and tossing on a shoreless and bottomless sea of speculation, revolving in endless vortices unable to advance, devouring and being devoured by each other in turn, the Biologist standing looking on, secure in his new-found truth, has practically addressed them as follows:—All attempts to analyse the Human Mind and resolve it into its original elements, when it is detached from that material structure which is its counterpart and regarded as pure spirit alone, have hitherto proved and are forever likely to prove impotent and vain. Now, if you will allow me, I shall be pleased to offer you in your perplexities, fluctuations, and uncertainties, one fixed point at least on which you may stand secure, and from which you may take a new departure; and that point is the fact, that for every thought, feeling, or emotion passing through the mind, there is a corresponding change in the movements of the brain and nerve centres. The use to which you can put this suggestion is this, that if you are unable to satisfactorily analyse the Mind by a direct introspection of its operations, you may be able to do so indirectly by an analysis of what is always open to you, viz.—the structure of the brain.

That is to say, if by a wide and minute comparison of the brains of all animals from the lowest to the highest, you can discover any principle on which the higher have been built-up out of the lower; if you can find any unity of plan running through the nervous mechanism of them all, if you can show, in a word, that the highest organizations are built on the same type as the lowest, by the mere compounding and re-compounding of the same original elements; you will possess a clue as to the way in which the human mind itself has been built up, which will be of the very highest value. For all you will then have to do will be to find, by observation and reflection, the key to the cypher which shall correctly translate the *material* changes into the *mental* changes, and to apply this key consistently throughout: at the same time that by a process of introspection you verify the conclusions arrived at. Acting on this suggestion Herbert Spencer, of all metaphysicians the one most profoundly acquainted with the results of biological research, proceeded to compute the nervous systems of all orders of animals, and by the aid of that principle of Evolution which was of such universal application in other fields, was soon able to announce what he called the unit of the nervous system—a nervous nodule with two filaments, sensory and motor attached—and to show that the nervous systems of all animals, up to man himself, were but the compounding and re-compounding of this simple unit, in more definite, more complex, and more concentrated forms. And having discovered, further, that the mental side or face of this primitive unit of nerve structure was what is known as Reflex Action it became comparatively easy for him to demonstrate that Instinct, Perception, Reason, Memory, Imagination, Will, and all the higher activities of the human mind, were but different sides of this simple reflex net, of greater and greater complexity, and on higher and higher planes. Introspection confirmed this objective analysis, and showed that all mental operations whatever, however complex and remote—operations which the

old school of metaphysicians had found it impossible to reduce to unity—could be demonstrated by the assistance of these biological researches to be compounded out of, and therefore resolvable again into, one simple act. At the same time, too, Spencer was able, by following this biological method, to reconcile the chronic antagonism which had existed between rival schools of metaphysicians since the days of Plato and Aristotle; for while holding with the school of Locke and Mill that all knowledge was derived from experience and association of ideas, his conclusions justified the splendid insight of Kant, who perceived that there must be mental moulds or “categories” to give *form* to such experience; while at the same time they showed that these categories themselves, instead of being native to the mind, and underived, as Kant thought them, were really the well-worn ruts and channels which similar impressions from without had made for themselves through the mind, during a long course of hereditary transmission.

But while psychology has thus been able to give us a more scientific analysis of the faculties of the mind than the old metaphysical systems, and one, too, resting to a great extent on a basis of demonstrable fact, it nevertheless, like Metaphysics, ends in *analysis* only. It undertakes to show us what reflex action is, what instinct is, what judgment is, what the imagination is, what the will is, and the like, but cannot, indeed does not profess to show us what men, under given circumstances, will believe on any great concrete interest of human life—on religion, government, and society—nor can it show the effects of these on the human mind; it gives us no help in understanding the concrete religions of the world, or the great laws of the mind on which they are constructed, and along the lines of which they are evolved. It can throw no light therefore on the problems attempted in this work—the problems of Civilization—and, so far, may be dismissed as unsuitable for our purpose. But I should be indirectly doing a real injustice to Metaphysics and Psychology, if, while setting

them aside as incompetent to solve the problems with which I propose to deal, I did not also attempt to indicate their positive contributions to advancing knowledge, and the part they have played in modifying our views of the world and human life.

At the outset, perhaps, I may remark that the interest, such as it is, shown by the general public in Metaphysics and Psychology, is owing largely to the light they are believed to throw on the great problems of religion, whether as strengthening the popular creed, modifying it, or altogether destroying it. Indeed were it not for this, but little interest could attach to these dry metaphysical discussions, except perhaps the curiosity that is always attracted to insoluble problems, and which, as in the case of perpetual motion, invests them to a certain class of minds, with a perennial charm. What human interest could there be, for example, in knowing whether the will is absolutely free or not, when to all intents and purposes it is practically free, were it not that the answer is believed to have some bearing on the moral responsibility of man, and so indirectly on the doctrine of future rewards and punishments? What interest could we have in those interminable analyses of what is called the moral sense, those attempts to decompose it, or account for it, were it not that if duty is to be regarded merely as a form of self-interest, sublimated, refined, and perhaps more or less disguised, then there is nothing in man to distinguish and separate him and his destiny from the beasts that perish, whereas if it is a thing *suu generis*, a 'categorical imperative,' a faculty pointing like a finger to God, then it is important to every religious mind to be aware of it? And so, again, if Mind is an immaterial entity, entirely unconnected with the body, there is nothing to interfere with our free belief in its immortality, but if, on the other hand, it is indissolubly connected with the material structure of the brain, there is an opening left for doubt whether it may not die with that material body with which it is bound up, with whose condition it varies, and on which it would seem to depend. But if the

solution of these and the like questions would at any age of the world have had a profound influence on religious beliefs, it is important to observe that the old school of Metaphysics that raised them, could not resolve them, but continued to leave them vague, cloudy, and incapable of that palpable proof so necessary to bring them home to the minds of the great body of the people. Precisely the same problems had been discussed from the earliest times, by Greek Pagans and Hindu Polytheists, as well as by Christian Theists; but, except, as we have seen, by the insertion into Christian Theology of a few illegitimate conceptions, such as those of the infinite and the absolute, these discussions had in no way modified the prevailing religions. The reason, no doubt, was that the mind, when contemplated apart from its material counterpart, the brain, as it was by the old school of metaphysicians, is so subtle, vague, and shifting in its nature, so swift and many-changing in its moods, many of its operations have become so habitual, organic, instinctive, and but semi-conscious, that analysis of it is almost hopeless; the observer, after the most patient introspection, can but snatch at one or other of its passing phases, which, like auroras, escape and vanish before he can fix their characters, or, if seized, are seen to be but the side turned towards him, for the time being; the opposite side, although quite neglected in the shade, not being therefore non-existent, but journeying on in its turn to the front, there to be laid hold of in refutation by the next passing observer. And thus it is that the solutions of the old school of metaphysicians have swallowed one another in turn, revolving in endless monotony and in ever-returning cycles, cloudy, shifting, and vague, without basis, anchorage, or advance. In this condition they have remained, modified more or less in detail, perhaps, by advancing science, from the earliest times; until at last the advent of the science of biology, and the discovery of the intimate and exact connexion between the mind and the brain, gave to the metaphysicians as we have seen, a fixed and

certain point on which to stand, and from which to take a new departure. And as this discovery worked itself out into finer and finer detail its profound effects, not only on religious belief and practical life, but also on speculative thought, became more and more manifest. In the practical region it has enabled us to trace the causes of those diseases of the nervous system which were formerly believed to be due to spiritual agencies, as, for example when a man is suddenly stricken with paralysis, or loses his power of speech, or is subject to spectral illusions to disturbances of sensation, or emotional sensibility, and by enabling us to refer these nervous affections to their true causes, it has indirectly paved the way for their rational treatment. Insanity, too, instead of being regarded as the possession of the mind of the afflicted by some cruel, malicious, or mocking spirit, was shown to be due merely to functional or organic derangement of some portion of the brain, it lost, in consequence, in a great measure its peculiarly obnoxious and uncanny associations, and was treated on the same principles as any other bodily affliction.

So far for the action of Biology on Practical Life. On religious belief its effects have been even more marked. The sins and crimes of men, their unregulated passions and desires on the one hand, and on the other their generous impulses, pious sentiments, and noble aspirations, instead of being regarded as formerly as either whisperings and instigations of the Devil or inspirations of the Holy Spirit, were seen to be the results of the normal activity of the various parts of the brain, working under the manifold stimuli and temptations of life according to their proper laws. The old scriptural accounts of how men were possessed with devils, and of how these devils were cast out by this or the other agency, were seen to be sufficiently explicable as examples of some form of epilepsy or other allied nervous disorder, while the modern phenomena so frequent in revival meeting, and especially among the negro population when under great emotional

excitement, of men falling to the earth 'struck' by what the onlookers veritably believe to be the Holy Spirit, turn out on examination to be nothing more than hysterical seizures brought on by the extreme nerve-tension induced by over-powerful religious appeals. But, besides these deep incisions made into beliefs which fifty years ago were bound up in the very existence of the faith, the biological discovery of the connexion between the brain and the mind has to a great extent solved the question in what sense the will is to be regarded as free, and in what sense it is to be regarded as determined by inflexible necessity. It has shown, too, that mind, as we know it, is indissolubly bound up with physical organization, and so has modified, to a greater or less degree, the dogmas of predestination, original sin, moral responsibility, the future life, and the like, according to the weight different thinkers will be disposed to attach to such facts in their general theory of the world. To the Materialist, these facts will seem all-important; to the Idealist, who regards the Materialist as looking at the world from between his legs, and thus seeing all things inverted, they will not necessarily carry the same weight.

Thus far the reader will observe that these modifications of religious belief have been due rather to the scientific facts brought to light by Biology, than to the analysis based on these facts which constitutes the science of Psychology. The part played by the science of Psychology itself in advancing thought is, that by its analysis of the mind it has demonstrated a *unity of plan* throughout the mental as well as the material world; and so, as seen in the philosophy of Evolution, has modified the solutions hitherto given to the wider problem of the world. And, furthermore, in passing, I desire to remark that although Metaphysics and Psychology generally, in so far as they deal in analysis of the mental faculties merely, can throw no light on the concrete problems with which we propose to deal, they have, nevertheless, in their very searchings

it the roots of our knowledge, like the alchemists of old, struck on new discoveries of great value, true distinctions where all had hitherto been lumped together in confusion. These discoveries, which consisted not in *analysis*, but in the recovery of original *facts* of the mind, are rather the incidental disclosures of Metaphysics, than normal results of its proper method, but when once brought to light they may be made, like any other facts of Nature, the bases of new views of the world and of human life, and as such, will appear when we come to the subject of religion, and the laws of the mind on which it is constructed.

In the meantime it is worthy of note that the Psychologist who has superseded the old Metaphysician by reason of his having based his results on the science of Biology, has destroyed the real significance of his biological facts in their relation to the greater problem of the world, by making Physical Science which is an *instrument of investigation* had proved so useful to him, his *standpoint of interpretation* also. The secret fallacy that underlay this fatal error was, in my opinion, the now exploded notion that because the mental changes of thought and emotion passing in our minds *vary* with the material changes going on in the brain, that therefore the changes in the brain are the *causes* of the changes in the mind, and the deduction from this fallacious inference was, that if we are to interpret the world aright, we must do it from the standpoint of what we believe to be the *cause*—the material changes in the brain—and not from the standpoint of what is only an *effect*—the mental phenomena themselves. That is to say, we are to interpret it from the point of view of Physical Science, not from the point of view of the Mind itself. Now, it has recently been over and over again shown that the physical movements of the brain can, in no sense of the word *cause*, be the cause of the mental phenomena which accompany them—neither in the scientific sense of the term *cause*, which implies an *equivalence* between the antecedent and consequent, nor yet

in the real sense of the word, which is derived from our experience of *will*, and therefore involves a passage from a mental to a physical act, and not, as in the case before us, a passage from a physical to a mental. But this announcement came too late to prevent the erection of those great systems of Materialistic Philosophy, whose authors, nothing doubting, went to work with Physical Science not only as their *instrument of investigation*, which was legitimate, but as their *standpoint of interpretation*, which was false and fatal. For, the result of thus making Physical Science, with its retort and scalpel, the standpoint of interpretation, is that they have dropped out of the problem to be solved—the great problem of the world and human life—its two most characteristic and essential elements—the idea of *quality* and the idea of *cause*. From the point of view of Physical Science, a cause, as all scientists admit, can be an *antecedent* only, nothing more, and the relation of cause and effect, that of antecedent and consequent merely. To get any other idea of cause you must abandon the scientific standpoint. The true idea of cause, as these very scientists themselves admit, is got from the experience of our wills as opposed to the resistance of objects about us. But this experience could never be got from Physical Science, which can take cognizance only of what can be seen or touched; but can only be known from introspection—that is to say, from the mind itself. In like manner, too, if we take Physical Science as our standpoint for interpreting the world and human life, and regard (as the materialists do) the higher feelings of the mind as but the compounding and re-compounding of some primitive simple feeling, how can we get the difference in *quality*, which all feel and admit, between a feeling of selfishness and one of self-denial, a feeling of honesty and one of policy, a feeling of fear and one of reverence, a feeling of lust and one of love? Obviously the difference of *quality*, which can only be known to the mind, cannot be discovered by physical science. It is got by introspection only—that is to say, from

the standpoint of the mind itself. Indeed to carry out consistently the interpretation of the world from the standpoint of Physical Science, one would have to regard intellect, virtue, and beauty, as mere forms of matter and motion—for if changes in the physical organ of the brain are the bases of all the mental attributes, changes in matter and motion again are the bases of changes in the brain—and thus that idea of *quality* which is most immediate to men's lives and thoughts, would cease to exist. Now a thinker, who takes Physical Science as his standpoint of interpretation, and from it desires to construct a theory of the world at all harmonious, adequate, and complete, is reduced to extremities, how he is compelled to shift the standpoint he has taken up, and occasionally, as if for life, to throw it overboard altogether, may be seen in the following illustration with which I may fitly conclude these few discursive remarks. It is taken from the *First Principles* of Herbert Spencer, the book which is the basis of his whole philosophy, and which contains those doctrines which distinguish it from all other forms of Positivism. In this work Spencer sets out with the determination to give to Science and Religion such a reconciliation as shall be at once convincing, complete, and ultimate, and to do this satisfactorily, his object is to show that at bottom both Science and Religion rest on one and the same ultimate fact or truth, and that therefore in this truth they are harmonized and reconciled. Accordingly, after a long and complicated analysis, he brings both Religion and Science down to this ultimate fact, which he calls 'The persistence of Force,' or, as he otherwise expresses it, *the fact that the quantity of force in the Universe continues fixed and constant*. This is the truth on which Religion rests, and, being also the truth on which Science rests, it is, according to Spencer, the truth in which they are reconciled. Now, when one remembers that it is admitted on all hands (even Spencer himself admits it) that Science deals with the *phenomenal* world, the world of men and things,—whereas Religion deals with that

which lies *behind* the phenomenal world, and of which the world of men and things are the manifestations and passing shows, one will be prepared to find a fallacy somewhere, and most probably that the term 'persistence of Force' will have been so manipulated that, instead of being used consistently throughout to mean one thing, it will have been used indifferently to mean two quite distinct things. And such, indeed, is the case. In one half of the book, Spencer uses the term 'persistence of force' to express simply *the sum-total of forces in the natural world*; in the other half, he uses it to express that which lies *behind* these forces, which is the *cause* of them, and of which they are the manifestations and effects; and, like a skilful circus-rider, he steps from one to the other indifferently as it suits his purpose. A small but most significant circumstance in regard to this is, that he writes 'persistence of force' with a small letter, when he means it to stand for the sum-total of forces in Nature, but with a capital letter, as we should expect, when he means it to represent that which lies behind Nature, and which corresponds, in a way, to our idea of God. Science can rest on the 'persistence of force' only in the sense in which the persistence of force means that sum-total of forces in the natural world which never varies in amount; Religion can rest on the 'persistence of Force' only in the sense in which the term is used to mean the ever-present Cause behind these forces. This fatal confusion in the use of the term 'persistence of force' is paralleled by an equally fatal confusion in the use of the term 'cause.' In its scientific sense, the 'persistence of force' can be a cause only in so far as it is an antecedent, and in this sense the cause of the phenomena of the world *to-day* would lie in the phenomena of *yesterday*. But the phenomena of the world to-day, Spencer says, are the manifestations or *effects* of an Unknown Cause, that underlies alike the present, past, and future. That is to say, every phenomenon has at the same time two different causes, one which *precedes* it and another which *underlies* it—

CHAPTER V.

CARDINAL NEWMAN.

HAVING seen that neither History, Physical Science, Metaphysics, nor Psychology can, by their methods or subject-matter, throw light on the great problem of civilization—with the varied play of religion, government, and material and social conditions which that involves—I now invite the reader to a brief consideration of the new organon of truth announced by Cardinal Newman in his *Grammar of Assent*, and set forth by him in that work with an unusual abundance of illustration and detail. This new organon or instrument of truth he has called the ‘Illative Sense.’ But, as preliminary, and by way of seeing better the full bearing of this organon on the problems of life, it may be expedient perhaps to consider for a moment the character of the author, and the objects which by means of his new instrument he seeks to realize. Born with a deep and pious nature, Newman’s youth fell on a time when the militant attitude and aggressive criticisms of Science on the one hand, and the torpor of the established Church on the other, had begotten a general scepticism among the cultivated, and among the great masses, a deep and wide-spread indifference to religious concerns. Possessed of that devout and more or less ascetic spirit, which may go hand in hand equally with intellectual gifts of the meanest or the highest order, a spirit which has always a tendency to subordinate the merely cold and abstract truths of the reason, to the deep longings of the heart for something on which, in this harsh world, to repose in safety and loving trust, Newman’s thoughts as he grew to manhood naturally turned to religion—to that religion which, by its very nature, is the haven of those homeless souls who

of *Assent*, his first object is to get rid of Science as an instrument of the highest truth; and this being done to replace it by an instrument of his own, which shall command men's full conviction and assent, and will enable them to decide, among other things, between the conflicting claims of the different religions—Catholicism, Protestantism, Mahomedanism, and the rest—which lay claim to supreme authority over the thoughts and consciences of men. This instrument he calls the 'illative sense.' Now, to break the authority of Science—the root of all scepticism at all formidable—it was necessary to show that its axiom—the uniformity of the laws of Nature—is at bottom only an *inference of greater or less probability*, not a *certainty*; and that therefore Science cannot carry with it that deep assent and conviction which many other things—and among them Religion—are capable of producing. And accordingly, after the most formidable preparation, Newman sets himself to accomplish this feat with all the ingenuity, subtlety, and logical intrepidity of those schoolmen of the Middle Ages, of whom he is the legitimate descendant.

In his *Essay on the Human Understanding*, Locke had contended that the degree of credence or assent we give to any proposition, is in proportion to the weight of the evidence by which it is supported; and therefore that any fact, the evidence of which was full and complete (as, for example, a law of Nature), must command our unreserved and unqualified assent. Not so, replied Newman; what you call a full and unreserved assent is only, when looked into, an *inference* of a greater or less degree of probability, not an *assent*. There can be no degrees in assent; it is a mental act complete and all-sufficient in itself. Assent to be assent must be the full and unreserved acquiescence of the whole mind in the truth of a proposition, and as such can of course admit of no degrees. To admit of degrees, a belief can only be an inference, and therefore can inspire us with the feeling only of greater or less probability, never of certainty. Now, the belief we have in the uniformity and

invariability of the laws of Nature, Newman contends, is an inference only; an inference of high probability, it is true, but one which can never amount to certainty, and therefore never can command a full, unreserved, and unconditional assent. That the sun will rise to-morrow morning is most probable, but it can never amount to an absolute certainty, for there is no reason, he contends, why, because it has always risen, it will always continue to rise. Nor is there any reason why, because stones thrown into the air have always fallen, they will always continue to fall; or that fire, which has always burned men, should always continue to burn them. That is to say, there is no *necessary* certainty in the uniformity of the laws of Nature, and therefore there can be no unreserved assent of men to the affirmation of their uniformity. But if the uniformity of the laws of Nature, although supported by a superabundance of evidence, can never amount to a certainty, and cannot therefore command our unconditional assent, there are many other facts or propositions, Newman contends, to which we can give an unconditional assent, even when the reasons that can be formulated in their favour would be quite insufficient to produce assent in other minds. The belief of a child, for example, in the knowledge of its parents, or its faith in their love and virtue; the belief of the youth in the judgment and infallibility of his teachers and masters; the belief of many people in the medical man who attends them; the belief we have in the integrity of men of whom perhaps we have seen but little; our belief in the recorded and accredited facts of history, in certain religious dogmas, perhaps, in which we have been brought up, or which seem to satisfy the natural longings and affinities of the heart, are all instances of that full and unreserved assent the mind gives to things or propositions for which full and adequate reasons perhaps cannot be adduced. In a word then, while to the uniformity of the laws of Nature we can at most attach only a high degree of probability, there are certain concrete facts of life, of history, and of religion, to

which we can yield a full and unreserved assent. And the conclusion to be drawn from this, according to Newman, is, that the doctrine of the uniformity of the laws of Nature must give way to those facts and doctrines of Religion of which we have full certainty; and Science, which deals with the laws of Nature, must give way to Religion, which deals with these facts and doctrines. In other words, the authority of Science over the intellect, heart, and conscience of man, must yield to the authority of Religion.

In this way Cardinal Newman gets rid of Science—the great antagonist of Religion, and the main obstacle to the reception of its teachings. In doing so, he leaves Religion once more secure on its own basis, and it now only remains with him to decide between the various concrete religions or churches that lay claim to supreme authority over the hearts and consciences of men. But the question is, how is this to be done, how determine which is the true religion? Having thrown out Science, as unable to give to her laws more than a high *probability*, Newman is obliged to cast about him for some instrument of truth that will command full *assent* and certainty, and that will enable him to decide between the rival claims of different churches and religions. This instrument he finds in what he calls the ‘*illative sense*.’ It is by this sense, he declares, that the truth in all *concrete* matters is to be determined, and as, unlike Science, it can give us that absolute certainty to which we can give full and unreserved assent, it is the instrument by which we are enabled to determine which is the true religion. The reason why, after having discarded Science, Newman turns to Religion is, that, besides Science, it is the only thing that claims authority over men’s whole nature. The next question, therefore, is, which of the various concrete religions or churches, claiming a supernatural origin, is the true one? and this, according to Newman, is to be determined, like all other concrete things, by the ‘*illative sense*.’ Now, by the ‘*illative sense*’ he means that sense by

which certain individuals are enabled to reach truths, to perform feats, to judge between conflicting evidence or opinions (the results justifying their conclusions as the right, the best, the true), by a method which is either altogether inscrutable, or can only be partially explained. When a great billiard-player, for example, compiles a heavy score under most unpromising circumstances, he does so by means of a power more or less inexplicable to the ordinary bystander, that is to say, by what Newman calls the 'illative sense.' When the skilled physician detects the true nature of a patient's malady under the most complicated symptoms, by minute and perhaps evanescent signs, not to be formulated, he does so by means of an art beyond the reach of formal logic, which Newman calls the 'illative sense.' When the eye of a Napoleon sees at a glance amid all the complexities of a battle-field—the numbers and disposition of the enemy, the peculiarity of the ground, the tactics of generals, their talents, their foibles, and the like—where and how to strike so as to win the day, he does so by that 'illative sense' which is beyond the reach of merely abstract knowledge. When the skilful pleader sees from the character of his brief, the prejudices of the jury, the pedantries of the judge, how to make such a presentation of his case as shall win the verdict for his client, he does it by a power which cannot be included under general rules, and which may be called the 'illative sense.' When the detective tracks his victim, like a sleuth-hound, through all the mazes and windings of pursuit, by means of a clue apparently the most slender and unsubstantial, he does it by an art beyond the reach of instruction—by the 'illative sense.' In the same way, when an artist composes a landscape like Turner, a poem like Shelley, an oratorio like Handel, when he forms himself into a model of gentlemanly deportment like Chesterfield, or when, like Ruskin, he discloses beauties of flowers or landscape which escape the common eye, he does it by that incommunicable something which we call genius, but which Newman would term the

'illative sense.' In like manner, too, according to him, there is no test of truth in matters relating to the concrete facts of history, science, research, and theology, like that furnished by the cultivated 'illative sense.' To know what you are to believe as to the value of ancient documents, or the credibility of certain historical facts, you must go to the trained 'illative sense' of men like Mommsen or Niebuhr. Even in Science itself, you must go for the adumbration of new discoveries, and for knowing where and how to look for some new law, to the trained but more or less intuitive and unconscious 'illative sense' of a Newton, a Faraday, or a Darwin. And lastly, and this is the important point, to determine which is the true religion among the many that to-day lay claim to supreme authority over men's lives and opinions, you must go to the man of cultivated 'illative sense' in this department of thought; who, after imbuing himself with the history of these various religions—their triumphs, their vicissitudes, their reverses, their capacity to satisfy the wants and aspirations of the human intellect and heart, their moral injunctions and prescriptions, their power to mould society, and advance civilization—shall, by a kind of intellectual and spiritual tasting, try them and decide whether they be of God or no. Now, as the less finely-endowed can have no means of knowing the truth for themselves in any large department of life or thought, except in so far as they yield up their judgment, their full and unreserved assent, to those who have the special genius or 'illative sense' required, it follows that Authority, as such, is the sole, the ultimate principle in religious, practical, and speculative life. And furthermore, Science having been thrown out as uncertain, unreliable, and incapable of commanding for its laws that full and unqualified assent which other things can command, it follows that more authority belongs to the mother who feeds you and in whom you absolutely confide, than to the scientific demonstration that the food is unfit for you; to the teacher who discourses to you on the beauties of mediæval astronomy, than to the law of

gravitation and the scientific proof that the earth revolves around the sun, to the old and confidential physician who has always attended you, than to the new scientific discovery which reverses his whole mode of treatment, to the individual or church that announces a new miracle than to the scientific analysis which exposes it, or the scientific proof which demonstrates its impossibility. And the author of the *Grammar of Assent* himself, having tasted with his undeniably fine 'illative sense' the various religions of the world, and come to a decision, gives notice in this book that the Church of Rome is the voice of truth, to which, he having given his assent the world on the principle of authority is justified through him in giving its assent also.

The above is a rough outline of Cardinal Newman's doctrine of 'assent,' and of that 'illative sense' by which he would replace and supersede Science as an organon or instrument of the highest truth. When thus plainly stated, its weakness and absurdity seem, to me at least, so palpable, that I should have passed it by unheeded, but for the great ability and eminence of the author, and the influence he exercises on all hands over men outside the Roman Catholic communion—men who although very glad of his assistance in beating off the atheist and infidel, nevertheless feel obliged, I have noticed, to stop short and draw the line at the winking Madonnas, the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius, the miraculous cures at Lourdes and other supernatural interventions of the present day, to which the Cardinal, with true logic, feels no difficulty in giving his full and unqualified assent. In attempting, then, to give a brief and formal refutation of his doctrines, the simplest course, perhaps will be to concentrate attention on the two great cardinal points on which his whole scheme rests.

His first great doctrine is that *the uniformity of the laws of Nature*, which is the basis of Science, cannot command our full and unqualified assent, and therefore must give way when confronted with facts and doctrine historical or religious, to

which we *can* give that unqualified assent. Now I propose to give this the direct negative, and to show that all facts and doctrines whatever, religious or other, must give way, when confronted with those laws of Nature which Science has established, and that to the uniformity of these laws alone can we give a full, unreserved, and legitimate assent, in the face of alleged facts and doctrines opposing it. In saying a legitimate assent, I thereby imply that there are many real assents which are not reasonable or legitimate. By this I mean that they spring out of elements which, if exposed, would be at once discarded, as weakening rather than strengthening the weight that is to be attached to the act of assent. To this class belong many referred to by Newman, as establishing the high importance of the act of assent in the search for truth. A child, for example, may have the completest faith in the knowledge, virtue, and judgment of his parents, and would give his unqualified assent to propositions embodying that faith, when notoriously to all the world besides the fact is quite otherwise. In cases of this kind it is evident that the fact of assent is no evidence of the truth of the proposition. In the same way the genuine assent given by their devotees to the thousand and one sects into which Christianity and other religions are divided, in so far as it is the result of mere tradition, which it is in so many cases—each individual giving his assent on the authority of his father who went before him—will not by most reasonable persons in the nineteenth century be held to lend much weight to the doctrines believed, or virtue and importance to the act of assent. The common case, again, of young men giving a full and unqualified submission and assent to the teachings of masters and professors, whose attainments and judgment they will see a few years afterwards to have been of the most stunted and limited nature, is another instance of assent not calculated to impress us with its value as an indication of truth. Again the common experience of most medical men of the unbounded confidence reposed in their knowledge and judgment by one or

other of then patients, when the limitations of that knowledge are only too patent to themselves or others, is not likely to increase our respect for the act of assent as such. And lastly the not uncommon instance of innocent maidens falling in love with clever but unscrupulous scoundrels, in whose honour and integrity they are all the while placing the most implicit faith and confidence not as a rule justified by the event, is not an act of assent likely to be appealed to by the friends of the victim, in justification of its value in the search for truth.

The above are all instances of *assent* in the meaning of the term as used by Cardinal Newman and as opposed to what he calls *scientific inference*. With most readers we may safely predict that, instead of demonstrating the superior importance of the act of assent over scientific inference as an indication of truth, they will have precisely the opposite effect. Indeed had he no more pregnant instances of the value of assent than such as these, his case would be a hopeless one. But he does give us instances of assent where although the reasons for the assent cannot be formulated or completely stated the result nevertheless justifies the truth of the judgment to which the assent was given. Among others he speaks of the assent we often give to the integrity of character of friends casual acquaintances or even strangers, of our unshaken confidence in them even in the teeth of ugly imputations based on evidence not easily gainsaid, and of the final justification of our confidence even when the reasons alleged for that confidence would not be felt sufficient to justify it in others' minds. Now turning for a moment the equally common fact that in actual life men are as often deceived in the assent they give to their friends' virtue as the world is in the overt acts alleged against him, we may say, that in any case where the assent is justified by the facts, it is because we have seen—or felt by a species of intuition which is only a finer form of seeing—so deeply into the central law of our friends' nature, that we would back our insight against any superficial appearances to the contrary, which is

only saying that our assent is based on a just insight into the laws of the mind (even although the subtle indications on which we grounded our belief cannot be roughly formulated), and therefore is a legitimate *scientific inference*, rather than a blind, unreasoning, unconditional *assent*. The assent again which we give to the truth of certain historical facts—as the murder of Julius Cæsar for example—which are generally accepted, is quite legitimate, because there is no reason in human nature or the experience of life why we should *not* credit them. That assent of this kind is only at bottom an inference of a greater or less degree of probability, would be seen if any just and weighty reasons could be adduced against the assumed fact, for we should then find that our assent would be seriously weakened or reversed. Of the same nature as the last is the assent given to scientific calculations, predictions, or conclusions, which we have not ourselves verified, and could not perhaps, for want of the necessary knowledge, verify if we wished. In these cases, too, we give our assent because there is no reason for doubting the calculations, but rather every reason as the world goes for believing in their truth.

And thus in analyzing the various kinds of Assent, we find them divisible into three categories. The first includes cases of ignorance and inexperience, as the belief of children and young people in the unbounded knowledge and unerring judgment of their parents and teachers; of tradition, as the adherence of the great masses to the religion in which they happened to be brought up; of strong feeling, as the trust of innocent maidens in scoundrels, or of stock-brokers and the public in the news which has produced a panic; of desire, and the love of sympathy, as the credulity on which the flatterer relies, and the like. These are all instances of assent which weaken the value of the act of assent as an index of truth. The second class of assents are those given to historical, personal, or other alleged facts, which do not run counter to any law of the world or of human life—such for example as the murder of Cæsar, or the report

that a certain person died by committing suicide—and which we have no reason to doubt. The last class are those where our assent—as for example to a person's integrity—although given on slender external grounds, is justified by circumstances and results, but where that assent when analysed will be seen to have rested on deep internal grounds of insight into character, and therefore to be rather a legitimate act of scientific inference, than a blind unreasoning assent. And thus the conclusion we have arrived at is, that the act of assent, although indispensable for action, is useless as an index of truth, that when it turns out true because it is founded on a scientific insight into Nature, the world, or the human mind, it loses its value as mere assent, and is of value only as science. Whereas, when it is not founded on science, whether it happens in the individual instance to turn out true or false, it is worthless or worse than worthless as an indication of truth.

Having shown the worthlessness of the mere act of assent, as an index of truth I now go farther, and remark that a law of Nature once announced by Science, it is a necessity of thought that we should give to its uniformity and invariability our full and unqualified assent, in the face of all alleged facts or religious doctrines whatever opposed to it. In those laws that are simple and free from obscuring complications, this necessary character of assent is at once apparent. To what religious doctrine or historical incident, for example, could we give our assent so absolutely and unreservedly, as to the belief that if we put our hand in the fire it will be burnt, although Cardinal Newman would call this a scientific inference only of greater or less probability? Put any man, saint or sinner, on the edge of a precipice, and threaten to push him over, and you will soon discover whether his assent to the uniformity and invariability of the law of gravitation is a mere scientific inference of greater or less probability only, or a dead certainty admitting of no degrees. Of course where the proof of a law of Nature is involved, and only familiar to experts, a greater or less degree

of probability only may be attached to it by the ignorant, but that can only be because they are unacquainted with the nature of scientific proof. That the sun will rise to-morrow may be only a probability to those who do not know the evidence on which it rests, but to those who do, it will command an assent as complete and absolute as the fact that fire will burn them. In like manner the calculation of eclipses being known only to mathematicians, the prediction of any particular eclipse may be received with more or less incredulity by the ignorant, but it will be only because they are ignorant. The fact is that when once Science, by its exact processes of observation, experiment, and verification, has convinced itself of the truth of an alleged law of Nature, the uniformity and invariability of that law in all time, present, past, or future, is a *necessity* of thought to which the most absolute assent must be given, whether it be a simple law, as that fire will burn or a stone will fall, or one reached after complex calculations, as the prediction of eclipses and the like. The reason why the uniformity and invariability of the laws of Nature is a necessity of thought to which we must give an absolute and unreserved assent is, that to doubt it or deny it, would involve the assertion that something might become nothing, or become something else without a cause, which is to deny the persistence of force; and is a proposition that could be entertained only by the complete disruption of our intelligence itself, which proceeds on the assumption that a pound to-day must weigh a pound to-morrow, else we could be sure of nothing, we could predict nothing, we could infer nothing, we could prove nothing in present, past, or future. The billiard-player could not be sure of the momentum of his balls, or the angles they would make with each other; the general could not depend on his ammunition, the distance it would carry, or the disposition and tactics of the enemy; the doctor could not rely on the same symptoms having the same meaning twice together; or the detective and man of the world on the same expression meaning the same character.

I come now to the second point, which after all is the main object of the chapter—viz, to show that the 'illative sense,' by which Cardinal Newman would replace Science as an organon of truth, is at bottom only another name for what we call Art, that is to say, Applied Science and therefore can have no more authority than that same Science which is its essence but which it professes to supersede and ignore.

Having thrown out Science, and the abstract laws of Nature which it discloses, nothing can remain to Newman, as a source of authority over men's minds and consciences, but some one or other of the concrete religions to be found in the world, and his object is to find some organon or instrument of knowledge by which the choice between these various conflicting religions is to be determined. It cannot be Science, for that he has already thrown out as being able to claim for its laws only a greater or less degree of probability, and therefore not to be reposed on as a certainty. Besides, Science aims at decomposing concrete things into the laws of different kinds which go to make them up. Man, for example is a concrete object, and the aim of Science is to separate out as far as possible the various mechanical, chemical, physical, biological, and psychological laws, which, when united in their entirety, make up his personality. But what Cardinal Newman wants, is some instrument or faculty that will deal with these concrete things *in their entirety*. Now, one would naturally suppose that concrete things being merely a bundle of laws of different kinds, the knowledge required to understand them, and deal with them would be the knowledge of the different kinds of laws. But that would only be a knowledge of the corresponding sciences, and the sciences Newman has already discarded. What then can the organon be? To say directly that it is Art, would only be to say that it is Applied Science and that he cannot do, so he gives it a neutral and non-suggestive title—the 'illative sense'. But if we mark the examples already given of the 'illative sense, we shall find that it is nothing

more or less than what we call Art, or science applied. The billiard-player who can compile a heavy score under difficulties, does it by Art, that is to say by the skilful application of the conjoined sciences of angles, weights, momenta, and the like (by him implicitly known although not explicitly formulated) to different positions of the balls; attention to the laws of each of these sciences being necessary to the result, and a weakness in regard to any one of them at once vitiating the play. The doctor who detects the nature of disease by a kind of intuition does it by Art, *i.e.*, by the application of the known Science of disease, together with the finer experience of the connexion between signs and internal conditions, to the particular case in hand. The general who overpowers or outwits his adversary and wins the battle, does so by Art—by the application of the physical and mechanical sciences involved in the implements of war, the science of the movements of men in mass, and the science of human nature involved in realizing to himself what his opponent is likely to do under given circumstances. The inventor, too, who invents the steam-engine, for example, does so by Art—by the application of the science of physics. mechanics, chemistry, and the rest, to certain raw materials, as iron or steel, of which he has a knowledge, for a given end. The pleader at the bar, who gets a prisoner off under unpromising circumstances, does so by Art—by bringing to bear on the foibles of the judge, and the prejudices of the jury, a knowledge of the laws of evidence, and of the laws of human nature. In like manner, too, poetry, music, and art, are but applications to particular themes, of laws of the spiritual and æsthetic parts of man's nature, together with the laws of sound, colour, harmony, and rhythm. The fact that many of these laws cannot be adequately formulated, does not prove that they are not laws, that is to say, Science: but only that they cannot be adequately expressed in language, which for the most part is framed to convey the rougher perceptions of men. That they are laws is seen in the fact that the violation of any one of

them would be instantly detected in the result. So that when a man, by reason of his finer talents, is able to do things that others cannot do, or discover truths that others could not perceive, he does it by means of the greater number, complexity, and variety of scientific laws, of which, either by greater labour or finer sensibilities, he has become the master. But if further proof were wanted that Science—or the laws of different orders of facts of all degrees of fineness and quality—is the very essence of the ‘*illative sense*,’ it would be found in the fact that the same natural ability two hundred years ago, say, could not perform as great achievements, make as fine predictions, or form as sound judgments, as it can to-day, and that simply because laws of Nature have been discovered since which were unknown then. Poetry, art, music, acting, the art of pleading, and the like, depending as they do on laws of human life, and perception of form, colour, harmony, and the like, more or less the same in all ages, would not be expected to show the same advance, if indeed they advanced at all. Neither would wrestling, boating, cricket, billiards, and other games of skill, involving simple laws of physics and motion, known as well in ancient Greece as in the Europe of to-day. But the progressive arts, the arts of knowledge, advance by reason of the Science that is in them, varying with the amount of this scientific knowledge, and not with the natural ability of the experts, which we may admit to have been as fine centuries ago as now. What ‘*illative sense*,’ for example, would have enabled Adams or Leverrier to know where to look for a new planet, if the law of gravitation had not been already discovered? No physician, however great his natural ability, could possibly detect diseases two hundred years ago which are recognised at a glance by the veriest medical tyro of to-day. And why? Simply because the science of Medicine has made such strides since then. What could the natural talents and tactics of a Cæsar or Alexander avail, with the old weapons and methods, against the scientific warfare of modern Europe?

And yet it is not that genius has improved, but that science has advanced. What chance could there have been of Newton inventing the telephone, or perfecting electric lighting, at a time when the laws of electricity were not yet discovered? Again, what hope could there be of the genius of a Niebuhr finding out the truth about Rome or Egypt, before the discovery of monuments, and interpretation of hieroglyphics, enabled men to understand documents and relics otherwise dark and forever inscrutable? And lastly, what a different judgment men would form on theology, miracles, and schemes of redemption, at a time when from the state of science these things could not seem incredible, to now, when the discoveries of science have rendered many or the most of them absolutely impossible of belief.

And so Cardinal Newman, having thrown out Science at the beginning of his book on account of the havoc it was making with religious creeds, and all forms of supernaturalism, is obliged to bring it back again at the end, disguised as the 'illative sense.' Indeed, that a man of Cardinal Newman's immense intellectual powers should in this nineteenth century dream that there can be any organon of truth but Science, physical and mental—which is only organized experience of all kinds—is only another instance of how the pure intellect is deflected from the truth by the longings and desires of the heart.

CHAPTER VI.

THE NEW ORGANON.

THE subject of this work, as I have already said, is Civilization and Progress in their widest aspects—in a general way, the end to which Humanity is advancing, and the parts played by Religion, Government, and Material and Social Conditions respectively, in that advance, and more specially, the motor power which necessitates alike civilization and progress, the sum of Nature, the goal of Government, the laws of the mind on which religions are constructed and along which they are evolved, the part played by Religion in human life, the effects of different forms of Government on mental and moral expansion, and lastly, an analysis of the various factors, and an exhibition, not only of their statical relations to each other, but of their dynamical relations—of the way in which they act and interact as they roll on together in a mingled stream down the course of history. I have therefore deemed it expedient, before considering the new organon which I shall use in attempting to solve these important problems, to revert for a moment to the various recognized instruments of knowledge which we have just been considering, and to recapitulate briefly the reasons why each of these was found unsuitable for my purpose, as in this way I shall exhibit more clearly, perhaps, the necessity there is for some new organon for these higher problems, and at the same time shall, by the very process of exclusion, have guided the reader to where it is to be found.

There was first the large and interesting department of History, including the ordinary narrative and descriptive works of the schools, the philosophico-descriptive works of the great classical historians, as Gibbon, Hume, Macaulay,

Grote; and the purely philosophical works of the sociologists, as Montesquieu, Buckle, and Comte; and all these we were obliged to discard as instruments or intellectual standpoints, because, instead of throwing light on the present, they derived all their credibility and value from the present. In the narrative and descriptive forms the incidents are credible, and have the force of facts only in so far as we can realise them to be true from our insight into to-day. In those forms, where the narrative of events is woven into a consistent web and sequence by philosophical interpretations of cause and motive, the account is credible only in so far as we can realise that the like cause and the like motives would give rise to the like results to-day. And finally, in those purely philosophical forms, where all particular circumstances, motives, causes, and events, are thrust into the background, and where attention is fixed only on great general results, and the great general causes at work to produce them, the account is satisfactory only in so far as we can believe that effects, so many-sided and complex as those of the different periods of civilization, could be produced under like circumstances to-day, by the various laws or principles to which, by the different thinkers, they have been referred.

History being thus set aside, and the Past discarded, as a standpoint from which to interpret the Present—its main use being as illustration, appendage, or corroboration of great principles drawn from insight into to-day—we passed on to the other recognized instruments of knowledge, and found that, like History, they too were not what was wanted for our purpose. The Physical Sciences, with their methods of external observation and experiment, we were obliged to discard because they deal entirely with the phenomena and laws of matter, whereas our subject is Civilization and the phenomena and laws of mind, as seen in the changes passed through by religion, morality, principles of government, ideas, and habits of thought. Political Economy, too, we discarded, because it concerned itself entirely with the *material* laws that

regulate the production and distribution of wealth, whereas, in the chapters on Politics and Government, I attempt the quite different problem of tracing the effects of such production and distribution on the mental and moral expansion of the individual and of society generally, a matter which has entirely to do with *mental laws*. Metaphysics, again we discarded, because it splits the mind into separate faculties, isolates these faculties, and cuts them off from their organic connexions with each other, and then proceeds to *decompose* them into their original elements, whereas, the problem of Civilization is concerned with man only in his totality as a concrete entity, that is to say, is concerned with the laws that *unite* these separate parts or faculties together. For if I cannot get directly at the explanation of, say, a particular belief, I must do so indirectly by means of some law connecting it with what I know, as, for example, a stage of thought. So that, in attempting to solve the problem of civilization, instead of dealing with the faculties of man's nature when isolated and kept apart as in Metaphysics, we have to deal with the laws that unite these faculties and powers, the laws, for example, that unite sentiment with knowledge, knowledge with passion or desire, passion or desire with belief, and the like—so that from a change in men's material conditions you shall be able to predict a corresponding change in their social relations, from their social relations a corresponding change in their moral, or shall know how a change in knowledge, for example, will affect religion, or a change in religion, men's moral and social relations and so on. Scientific Psychology, too, although it has the advantage over Metaphysics (inasmuch as by the assistance it derives from Biology it is enabled to analyse more successfully the separate faculties and powers of the mind), we were obliged to discard, because, like Metaphysics, it deals only with isolated faculties—with the *partial* man, whereas civilization deals with the faculties united—with the *whole* man. Nor could that aspect of Psychology which, resting on the

science of biology, forms part of the science of medicine, help us, for it deals purely with morbid conditions of the brain and nervous system, and in consequence with the mind in a state of *disease* only; whereas, the problem of civilization assumes that men's minds are sane and *healthy*. And lastly, on examining the 'illative sense' of Cardinal Newman, we found it to be only another name for Art, that is to say, science applied; and to have in consequence no more validity or virtue than the various sciences that in its different forms are involved in it.

And thus the various recognized instruments of knowledge having been discarded as useless for our purpose, I am now in a position to exhibit the new organon which I propose to use for the solution of the problems of Civilization that lie before us.

To begin with, it is evident that those products of man which constitute his Civilization—his houses, industries, luxuries, comforts, political constitutions, codes of law, courts of justice, religious establishments, social hierarchies and the like—products all of them which he exudes as it were from himself and builds up around him as the nautilus its shell; it is evident, I say, that the specific character of these products at any given time is the immediate outcome not of any *part* of his mind, as dissected out by the metaphysicians, but of his *whole* mind, or say rather of his *will* as representing the full round and scope of that mind; they are the outward visible manifestation, the final product and expression, not of some, but of all the complex elements of his nature—his appetites, his passions, his interests, his aspirations, his sentiments, his ideals. But as Civilization is a problem of *men in masses* and not of the individual, it is evident that not every act of will is a social force or factor in civilization—not for example such actions as result from personal idiosyncrasy, or are limited to the family circle, or begin and end with the private heart—but such only as are coextensive with and have threads of relation connecting them with society as a whole. Now, if you could

once get to know what men would *will* to do, you could as easily forecast in a general way the course of civilization as you can the course of legislation when you know how they will vote, the line of direction taken being but the *arithmetical* or *mechanical resultant* and see-saw of the respective strengths of the opposing wills. It is not here that the difficulty of the problem lies, but in knowing how these individual wills are compounded out of the complex appetites, passions, interests, sentiments, ideals and opinions of the mind. For the will, be it remembered, is not the mere *arithmetical* or *mechanical resultant* of these affections or powers, as civilization is of the various individual wills that compose it, but like a chemical compound is rather the product of their *combination*, having properties as different from the elements that have made it up, as salt from the chlorine or sodium that combine to produce it, or water from the oxygen or hydrogen of which it is composed. It is evident, therefore, that if we are to solve satisfactorily the problem of Civilization we must take our stand not on any part or parts of the mind taken separately, but on the whole mind, not on any catalogue or inventory of its various attributes—appetites, passions, sentiments, and ideals—but on its unity as a living concrete whole. And it furthermore becomes apparent that the organon or method we must apply to solve the problems of Civilization must be *the laws of the human mind in its entirety, the laws that connect each part with every other and with the whole*, religion and sentiment with the understanding, the understanding with appetite or desire, appetite or desire with imagination and belief, and the like, so that as I have said, from a change in men's material conditions as affecting their sensuous appetites or desires you may be able to predict a corresponding change in their social relations, and from these again a change in their moral relations, and so on, or shall know how a change in knowledge will affect religion, a change in religion, social and moral relations, and the like. Now the weakness in all preced-

ing theories of civilization, as we shall see in detail further on, lies in the fact that their authors have taken their stand on some one or more of the mental elements involved, but not on them all, on some part or parts of the mind, and not on the whole. Comte, for example, takes his stand on sentiment as represented by religion, and on the understanding as represented by science; Buckle on the understanding as represented by science, and on the senses and appetites as represented by material and social conditions; Carlyle, on the imagination as represented by heroes, and the spiritual nature of man as represented by religion; Hegel on the logical evolution of the ideal in the mind, and so on. And although each of these eminent thinkers has exhibited the laws that connect his own favourite factors with much clearness and completeness, he has left the laws connecting them with the other factors blank and undetermined in the shade; Comte, neglecting the laws which connect the imagination and material and social conditions with those factors with which he specially deals; Buckle, the imagination and the spiritual nature of man; Carlyle, physical science and material and social conditions; and Hegel, all but the inner movement of Thought itself. None of them have therefore been able to explain the full complexity of the phenomena of civilization as we know them; as well indeed expect to get the expression of a face from one or two features without the ensemble; the properties of a chemical compound while neglecting some of its component elements; or to understand the phenomena of the human body from one or two of its organs without knowing the reciprocal relations of them all. Now, as against these illustrious thinkers I propose to take my stand, not on any part or parts of the mind, but on its full round as a concrete unity; and my organon shall be the laws of this unity, the laws that connect each of the parts with every other and with the whole.

Now, in calling this a new organon, I do not profess to have discovered something which has lain unknown and unused up

to the present time I mean merely that it has never before been employed systematically, and with conscious forethought, and that it has no place allotted to it anywhere in the splendid circle of the sciences. Even the inductive method was neither first discovered nor first used by Bacon, on the contrary, as Macaulay has said, this method has been practised ever since the beginning of the world by every human being. What Bacon did was to insist that if Philosophy is to bear fruit, this method must be fully, carefully, and systematically employed. In the same way, the new method which I here venture to submit to the reader for the solution of the higher problems of civilization—a method which works by the exercise of what may be called the *power of detachment*, as the inductive method does by observation and experiment—is not a method now used for the first time. On the contrary, we use it every day of our lives in judging of the dispositions of men and of what they are likely to do or think under given circumstances, thereby regulating the relations in which we are to stand to them. My own small part in the matter is merely to insist that, if we are to solve the higher problems of civilization in a way that shall be both useful and satisfactory—the great problems of religion, government, material and social conditions, and the part they play—this method must be fully, carefully, and systematically employed. And as I shall myself constantly employ this method in the solution of the problems attempted in this work, the reader will so far have a practical test, to begin with, of its worth or worthlessness, and any truths that may perchance be liberated in the course of these speculations, may fairly be attributed to the method employed rather than to myself. In order, however, that the reader may see clearly my own reasons for believing in the supreme value of this organon or instrument, I propose to show here that it is the method that has been unconsciously employed by the greatest poets, sages, and thinkers of the world. I shall show further how, by ignoring it, some of the greatest systems of philosophy have

come to wreck, and systems of policy of the greatest thinkers have ended in utopias and dreams. And lastly, I shall show that to the neglect of it—and the power of detachment by which it works—are due nearly all the great illusions of the world.

Of all the long array of thinkers and poets of modern times, the few who have most persistently used the laws of the mind *in its entirety* as their standpoint for the interpretation of the world—who have most systematically kept their minds open to the reception of these laws, as feeling, by a kind of instinct, that in them alone could any solid basis be found for the interpretation alike of the present or the past—are admittedly among the greatest—Shakspeare, Goethe, Bacon, Emerson, Carlyle.

I remember when as a youth I first began the study of Shakspeare, I was in the habit of reading almost entirely for the lustre of the writing, my attention concentrated on the pomp and tread of the sentences with their rich and resplendent imagery, much in the same way as when a boy I used to watch the procession through the streets of some mammoth circus, with its golden chariots, its spirit-stirring music, its glittering charioteers, but paying little or no heed to the internal coherence of the characters, the causal connexions of the dialogues, or the truth and sequence of the sentiment and passions. As time passed on, this excess of emphasis laid on mere expression gradually gave way to a growing interest in the structure and internal cohesion of the characters themselves, until now I care comparatively little for the pomp and magnificence of expression, but dwell with ever-increasing delight on that immense and subtle knowledge of the laws of the human heart down to its finest and most evanescent experiences, which enabled Shakspeare to follow, with the fatal sureness of a hound following the trail, the winding, ever-fluctuating, and evanishing line of thought and passion. Indeed, in so far as mere insight is concerned, one can imagine these dialogues shorn almost entirely

of that pomp of metaphor in which he so much delighted and indulged, and reduced to the plainest and simplest terms, without any derogation whatever from the profundity or fineness of the thought. In reflecting on Shakspeare, I always imagine him to have pondered his dramas long and well, to have worked at the connexions and sequences of thought and feeling with the greatest care, and down to the minutest detail, but to have filled in rapidly, painting with a free and dashing hand, seizing the first materials that came to him, and often using metaphors and words which touched his thought by the merest segment and side of their circumference and import. It was in this way, and by the lusties and glancing meanings of these innumerable segments, that he was able to shade the curve of his thought to its finest nicety, while associations aroused by the range and redundancy of words from which these segments were cut, gave to the whole that richness and brilliancy which so pleases the mind. It was with great justice, therefore, that one of the most penetrating and ardent of his admirers remarked, *that the distinguishing characteristic of Shakspeare was that he could say what he willed.* In saying then that I do not lay much stress on his immense and brilliant powers of expression, I do not mean that I undervalue the metaphorical power in itself. On the contrary, its possession in any high degree, and when used to express the finer shades of thought and feeling, is itself an indication of a high order of thought and genius; for it implies that the mind is so sensitive that, like light, all objects and qualities, even to the most subtle, make on it a distinct and definite impression, and therefore, by an unconscious selection, objects or experiences making a like impression may be freely used as metaphors to express each other's meanings. Of course much depends on the range of affinity of the individual mind in determining what particular experiences shall be crystallized as metaphors out of the vast and inexhaustible riches and complexity of the world and human life. Habitual moods and feelings have a tendency to express themselves in metaphors

drawn from the corresponding aspects of life and nature. In Milton or Byron, for example, where the habitual mood is one of lofty pride and elevation, the key is pitched high, and the thought expresses itself in metaphors of sublime, vague, or mystic character, drawn from the grander aspects of Nature. In Wordsworth, again, where the range of feeling is narrow, but of exquisite sensibility, the thought reflects itself in metaphors pure, simple, and drawn from those aspects of Nature to which he was most susceptible, rather than from the varied interests of the world. In religious poets and thinkers, like Newman and Keble, the sensibility is of that intense but limited nature involved in what we understand by piety—subtle perceptions of the effect on devotion of the varied influences of the world, spiritual or sensuous, whether as furtherances or hindrances—and accordingly the metaphors used to express this predominant mood, are drawn chiefly from those aspects of Nature and human life which best reflect it. But Shakspeare deals with the full round of relationships existing between each part of our nature and every other: and the immense range and variety of metaphor on which he draws from every quarter of Nature and life, is but the symbol and index of this breadth and range of thought and sympathy. So that one may say that Shakspeare's metaphorical power is largely the measure of his range and fineness of sensibility: as indeed, when well considered, it will be seen to be but another aspect of it. But what I am concerned here to emphasize is, that Shakspeare might have exhibited the same subtlety and power which enabled him to follow the intangible threads of thought and feeling as if they were the most gross and tangible of realities, without the use of that richness and redundancy of metaphor which to the vulgar is his highest, as it is his most obvious and superficial distinction. Goethe, who in many ways draws from the same deep wells of thought and feeling, is one of the chastest, purest, and simplest of writers. What constitutes Shakspeare's supreme glory, and gives him that unique place which he occupies among

men, is not so much his power of expression, which has been approached, if not equalled, by many men vastly his inferiors in insight, nor his poetical or lyrical power, which has been equalled, if not excelled, by several with no pretensions to his genius, but that unequalled knowledge of the laws of the human mind in its *entirety*, that unerring sureness of perception which, when we consider the difficulty there is in following the track of the simplest human spirit when acted on by vague and conflicting thoughts and emotions, has about it something portentous, superhuman, almost divine. In figuring him to myself, I often think of the difference between him and other men, as like the difference between the ordinary run of billiard-players and the great professors and masters of the art. The ordinary player commencing with a few careful and happy strokes perhaps, and compiling a small score rapidly and brilliantly, gradually, as the game advances, loses control of the balls which go distractedly in all directions, until at last he leaves them in positions from which it is impossible to score and so comes to an end. The great player, on the contrary, knows so accurately where the balls will be left after each stroke, that he can go on scoring with the same facility after any number of rounds, and in all positions of the balls. It is the same with Shakespeare. If we take, for example, the play of *Othello*, and represent the various passions, sentiments and impulses of the mind as so many billiard balls, we find him setting in motion one after another of these passions and sentiments, until he has them all in full activity, and then, as the interaction of conflicting passions proceeds, he knows so precisely where each particular impact will leave them all—putting one to rest altogether perhaps, giving another a tremendous momentum and sending it rushing among the rest, touching a third so skilfully, as to wake it up to an attitude of attention, and no more—that all are kept rolling on with the greatest precision and facility without a miss, ‘fluke,’ or false judgment to the end, while lesser men, after opening successfully, and every

now and then perhaps making some fine stroke—generally in the line of their natural genius or affinity—when confronted with the deeper, more subtle, and complex situations, with passions and thoughts diversified and conflicting, lose control of their characters, neither know what to do with them or where to leave them, and at last, in desperation, strike about distractedly in all directions, and end in bombast, unreality, and absurdity.

Such is Shakspeare, and the unique position he has won for himself among men by reason of his knowledge of the laws of the human mind *in its entirety and as a concrete whole*. But it is important to remark that these laws, to be available for the world, and for each man in the different and ever new life which he has to lead, must be separated and detached from that web of laws which constitutes the mind, freed from all foreign adhesions, and fixed as a constellation in the galaxy of truths, of which the world through long ages has slowly become the master; in the same way as in the physical sciences, although by mere empirical knowledge you may be able to deal with any concrete thing, to know its mode of action, and how to regulate it or adapt yourself to it, still, for your knowledge to be of use to others, or to be made available for the building up of knowledge of other kinds, the separate laws of which that concrete thing is made up must be detached, registered, and hung up as universal verities, to be used by whomsoever they may concern. A billiard-player, for example, may be able by practice to tell you precisely what point on the different cushions a ball will hit, when struck from any particular angle; but unless these angles can be abstracted from the actual cushions and table and balls, and represented abstractly in a mathematical diagram, they can never be available for any general purpose, and can never be used to build up truths of a more complex order, and of other kinds, in which the same laws are involved. In like manner, if a physicist were unable to abstract the law of falling bodies from two actual falling bodies, say two iron balls of different sizes; or the law of projectiles, from some special

projectiles of which he had experience; or the law of the expansion of gases, from the particular steam-engine with which he was concerned; his empirical knowledge of the behaviour of these balls and projectiles and engines would be of no assistance in solving other problems in which these laws are involved as factors. And so with the laws of the human mind. Unless they can be loosened and detached from the web in which they lie enmeshed, there may be great knowledge of the action of the mind as a concrete whole, but this insight is not available for other men who have *different* lives to lead. Of the millions who have read Shakspeare, and felt his profound insight into the human heart, how many have been able to avail themselves of a hundredth part of his wisdom? If men had to lead precisely the same lives as Hamlet or Othello, they would no doubt profit greatly by the knowledge which Shakspeare has opened up for them; but their own course of life being different, and they being unable of themselves to detach the great laws of the mind which are applicable alike to every human being, they are left as poor and helpless as before.

I desire further to observe, that it is precisely those men, who in the different ages of the world have detached the laws of the human mind and embodied them either in their own lives or in proverbs and generalizations, that have been regarded as Seers and Wise Men, in contradistinction to the promiscuous and unknown throng who, in every age, have not been able or not chosen so to extract them, and who in consequence have lain hide-bound in illusion, the dupes of appearances, the victims and slaves of habit, custom, tradition, superstition, delusion, and imposture.

Among the thinkers and seers of modern times who have shown insight into the laws of the human mind as a *concrete whole*, and whose range of thought is conterminous with the whole field of knowledge, Goethe stands pre-eminent. And although, like Shakspeare, he has chosen to throw this insight into a concrete, rather than an abstract form, by means of dramas,

novels, poems, tales, and the like, he nevertheless has let fall so many scattered grains of pure thought by the way, and has left so many gems of pure wisdom in a didactic, rather than a pictorial form, that the outlines of his great scheme of the world are sufficiently apparent. Many, if not most, of his dramas, novels, and even short poems, were written primarily with the idea of giving form and embodiment to some law or laws of the human mind in which at the time he was interested; although from the rich complexity of his mind they often ran on all sides into subtleties not contemplated in the original framing. The *Elective Affinities*, for example, was written to illustrate the idea that the affinities and attractions existing between the positive and negative poles in electricity, between acids and salts in chemistry, are paralleled in human life by corresponding attractions between the sexes. His *Tasso*, again, is so constructed as to emphasize the unconscious antagonism that naturally exists between the poet and idealist on the one hand, and the man of the world, the 'practical man,' on the other; while his *Faust* and *Wilhelm Meister* are embodiments of many of his thoughts on the different interests of life, and the great problem of human destiny. Many of his smaller lyrics, too, are the expression of those lighter connexions between sentiment and thought which private experiences of his own had at the time deeply impressed on his mind. Indeed, so anxious is he that these representations should be true embodiments of laws of the human mind, that in many instances, as for example in *Wilhelm Meister*, he has, to a great extent, sacrificed the interest of the narrative, and laid himself open to the charge of dulness. And furthermore, as, unlike Shakspeare, he has chosen to express his thoughts in the most chaste and simple form, it is evident that, in spite of the exquisite beauty of thought and feeling in his smaller lyrics, and the inimitable symmetry of their form, the supreme place he holds among the moderns is due chiefly, if not entirely, to his depth and subtlety of insight into the laws of the human mind as a living whole.

Among the prose writers and seers, again, of the modern world, who have thrown their wisdom into a didactic and abstract, rather than into a concrete and dramatic form, those who have made perhaps the deepest impression on their times, and whose names will most readily occur to the reader, are Bacon and Emerson, of those who have thrown it into a historical or biographical form, Carlyle.

Bacon has the same preponderating intelligence as Shakespeare—marred perhaps on certain of its sides by a defective fulness of sympathy—the same comprehension and range, combined with the most minute and subtle observation; and accordingly his works are a mine of wisdom and insight into the laws of the human mind in its entirety. And although, in his *Essays*, he dwells, perhaps, on these laws of the mind rather from the point of view of the man of the world, who values them for the selfish uses to which they can be put for worldly advancement and the like, than from the point of view of the idealist, who values them for themselves alone, or in reference to their bearings on spiritual and moral ends; nevertheless, in his writings generally, he exhibits potential insight into all parts of the mind alike, and into the relations of each part with every other. The subtle spiritual affinities which connect things most opposite in appearance, and to the sensuous eye, lay before his glance as clear as their sensuous and worldly relations; while his mind had that comprehensiveness and reach, which enabled him to take up a position so central and commanding, that from it he could survey all the kingdoms of the mind, and construct a map of the whole region as if in a bird's-eye view.

Emerson, too, has the same comprehensive sweep of observation as Bacon, and overlooks without strain the whole field of human thought. He knows the laws of the mind out-and-out, and reads with equal facility and sympathy the laws connecting the intellect with the passions and emotions, the passions and emotions with the sentiments, the sentiments with ideas, and ideas with the various forms of sensuous desire. But believing

that illusion always lurks in the concrete and embodied, he will not throw these laws into the form of drama, novel, or tale, but strips them naked, and gives them to us pure, and free from all taint of time and place, of circumstance or personality. He loves them, too, for their own sake; but if he has a bias, it is to mark their bearings on high sentiment and the spiritual nature, instead of, like Bacon, subordinating them to the necessities of practical 'fruit,' or the requirements of a sensuous and worldly prosperity. He has as much subtlety, too, and minuteness of observation, as he has reach and comprehension; and his eye is as awake to the baser motives, the cunning and rascalities of men, as that of a detective. He can dissect to a hair the parts played respectively in any concrete character or performance by the mingled motives of ambition, pride, desire, sympathy, or the love of ideas. In his *English Traits*, no essential characteristic of the English people escapes him; and although he remained in this country only a few months, his book has made all future treatment of this subject, from the same height of view (and without following on his lines), as impossible as Shakespeare's play of *Othello* has made all subsequent treatment of the passion of jealousy. He took in the mental lineaments of all classes and conditions, with the same easy unconsciousness, from the characteristics of cabmen and 'philistines,' to those of bishops, scholars, noblemen, men of the world, and *littérateurs*. He knows so well, in a word, the laws of the human mind in all their connections, ramifications, and remotest implications, that a hint, a word, an expression, is as good to him as a dissertation, a sermon, a scientific exposition; and, like those biologists who can reconstruct an extinct mammal from a bone of its foot, he can read the general in the particular, the abstract in the concrete, the macrocosm in the microcosm, and from a leaf, or blade of grass, can build up a world. He grasps, too, with as great facility the laws that run through societies, as those that play through the individual mind; and sees clearly that first secret of politics, viz., that

the character of a people, its stage of morals and culture, will of itself necessitate the form of government it will obey, knowing well that a mob of blackguards, or a horde of blood-thirsty savages, will as surely necessitate the policeman and the military despot, as a band of saints may be imagined to dispense with them.

Carlyle, too, like Emerson and Bacon, overlooks the whole field of thought, and knows the laws of the mind in their fulness and entirety through the whole gamut of aspiration and desire, from the worldly and sensuous up to the spiritual and moral experiences. Unlike Emerson and Bacon, however, he prefers to exhibit these laws in their concrete embodiment as they have appeared in history and biography, rather than in their severely abstract form. And yet, from the variety of thoughts he has thrown into in abstract shape, from the monotonousness of his didactic language and the emphasis he lays on certain cardinal features in the character of his heroes, the completeness and rotundity of his scheme of the world may, with a little patience and care, be clearly enough discovered. His insight into the laws of the mind as a concrete whole, is well seen in his biographies, where the facts (none of which or their significance escape him) are so put together and arranged in their relations to one another and the whole, that the resulting 'character' has all the force and impressiveness of reality. In his histories as in the *French Revolution*, he always attaches the sequence of events to primary impulses of the heart and imagination, rather than to mere abstract formulae. The 'September Massacres' for example, he refers, not to any abstract theories of the 'rights of man,' (although these were all the time passively consenting factors in the background) but to the great active and impulsive passions of fear (Prussians on the way to the capital), of preternatural suspicion (plots in the prisons), and the unpremeditated cruelty, frenzy, and rage, which in that lurid, demoniacal, and contagious atmosphere of suspicion and fear, the smallest spark (rip on the knuckles

from the cane of a suspected priest) would kindle into a blaze. With respect to his direct insight, I have always myself regarded his interpretation of Goethe's *Tale*—whether indeed it correctly represented the meaning attached to the *Tale* by Goethe himself or not, matters little—as perhaps the finest exhibition in our time, of insight into the relations existing between the various powers, faculties, and affections of the human mind, and the laws which regulate their mutual dependencies and interactions. In one instance alone can I remember his having neglected any great law of the human mind, but as on this law practically turned his whole scheme of government and politics, this neglect has been most disastrous in its effects, and, as the reader will hereafter see, gave rise to those reactionary theories of society and government, which have ruined his political influence and weakened his philosophical fame.

The writers whom we have just been considering are admittedly among the greatest poets and thinkers of the modern world, and have gained their pre-eminence, as we have seen, chiefly by their insight into the laws of the human mind *as a concrete whole*. They differ from writers like Kant, Mill, and Herbert Spencer, inasmuch as these latter deal with the physical sciences, or with the sciences of metaphysics and psychology, but have nothing to say on that science of the mind as a concrete whole, which is the keystone of the arch of knowledge, and in the absence of which, *as a standpoint of interpretation*, all other knowledge, however practical and useful in the ordinary way, becomes, in reference to the higher ends of life, and the finer forms of human insight, a superior kind of pedantry merely. They differ again from thinkers like Comte, who, although he avowedly took as his basis that primitive form of psychology known as phrenology, nevertheless, when he came to the interpretation of history, and the movements of society generally, took his stand on great broad and universal mental laws, but at the same time was so wanting in that

wisdom of life which was so characteristic of the great seers we have just considered—that knowledge of the laws of the *individual mind*, as distinct from the laws of mankind in the *aggregate*—that as we shall see further on, he easily fell into utopias and dreams. One great law of the human mind, however, he did perceive, and by more or less unconsciously holding fast to it through all complications, perplexities, and details he was enabled to give us that splendid interpretation of history for which he is so justly renowned. Again, the great seers we have mentioned, differ from theologians like Newman and Maurice, who, instead of dealing generally with the whole human mind and personality, and investing the law of each part with the same interest and importance as every other, have restricted themselves chiefly to certain special relationships, which indeed, like the specialist in medicine, they have cultivated with great thoroughness and detail, as if the problem of the world were: Given the relation of God and man, or of father and son, what are the laws that regulate the connections for good or evil of every other relation with this? at the same time that all other mental relationships are frozen, as it were, and cut off from their field of interest and enquiry.

And lastly, the great seers differ from the higher order of novelists like Thackeray, George Eliot, and Charlotte Brontë, who although professing in their various characters to deal with the laws of the human mind in its entirety, nevertheless will be found in practice to deal only with the ordinary level of thought and feeling in very ordinary human beings, or restrict themselves chiefly to the microscopic and morbid anatomy of that more or less limited range of thought and emotion of which the sexual relation is the central point, from which all radiates and to which all returns.

But the supreme value of a knowledge of the laws of the human mind is not only seen in the fact that it is the originion used by the great poets and seers of the world, it is seen also in the fact that to the neglect of these laws (and of the power

of detachment which is used to disentangle them) are due most of the illusions, impostures, and superstitions, of the world. It is because children cannot detach the law from the circumstance or thing to which it is for the time being wedded, that they imagine the virtue and beauty to be in their toys and dolls, which exist only in their own minds; and it is for the same reason that the youth imagines he sees that far-off and rainbow-like charm in the girl of his fancy, which he himself lends to her. In like manner, it is because men cannot detach the man from the position he occupies, that we have had in history the basest and most contemptible of creatures worshipped as deities, and that, too, by men who, as reward for this pleasing illusion, have been whipped and trampled on from youth to age, to gratify the avarice, passions, or caprice of the despots themselves have made. It is because men cannot detach the man from the occupation—the owner of land, for example, from his land—the man engaged in trade, from his shop—that you have that recognized difference of nature and kind among men, which has become embedded like a tape-worm in the brain of the Old World, and which not only has kept the great masses of the people willing serfs, from the dawn of history down to within the last few centuries, but would, if not extracted, have continued to keep them so until the end of time. It is because men cannot detach the fact from the phrases which overlay and disguise it, the thought from the expression in which it is wrapped up and concealed, that you have flashy scoundrelism pushing homely honesty to the wall, the posing *charlatan* bearing away the palm from the simple lover of truth, the blatant and unblushing demagogue driving the serious statesman from the helm. It is because men cannot detach their feelings from the objects with which in time and place they have been associated and bound up, that you have men persecuting each other because the same happiness and bliss which the one feels in contemplating the fatherhood of God, the character of Christ, or the joys of

Heaven, another feels in bending before the will of Allah, or contemplating the character of Mahomet, or the Paradise to which he invites him. It is because men cannot or will not detach their perceptions from their feelings, that you have the *laudator temporis acti*, that you have men's philosophies, as Goethe said, but the mere supplement of their practice, so that what they love they tend to laud, what they hate they tend to depreciate, what they would like to do they think they may do, and what they are in the habit of doing they believe it right they should do. It is because men cannot detach themselves from the occupation in which they are engaged, that they become subdued to the element they work in, and in the greater number of instances the experienced eye can predict from a man's appearance what is his occupation, and from his occupation what is the general range and configuration of his sentiments and ideas.

The above are a few familiar instances of the illusions into which men fall who neglect to exercise that power of detachment which is the main instrument by which the laws of the human mind are to be disengaged from the circumstances in which they are wrapped up. And it is to these illusions that a large part of the evils, the injustices, the trials, the heart-burnings, the misunderstandings and chronic discontents of life are directly traceable. I do not mean to imply that it might have been otherwise. On the contrary, I perceive, and shall show further on, that only in the far future can we expect it to be different. I would merely remark here, that it is only the 'education' which will teach men to know the laws of the human mind and to see through illusions, that can help them to remove the ills of life, not the mere pedantry which is about all that is usually implied in the term, and further that just as a man's power of detachment is the best index of his rank in the scale of intelligence, so, too, in proportion to the general diffusion of this power throughout a society or a nation, is the stage of civilization it has reached.

To illustrate still further the importance of a knowledge of the laws of the human mind as a *concrete entity*, for the higher problems of life, I had originally intended to have pointed out in this chapter the utopias into which some of the greatest thinkers have fallen, from the want of knowledge, or neglect, of these laws; but on remembering that in future chapters I shall have occasion to controvert certain doctrines held by some of the most eminent of these thinkers, I have judged it expedient to pass them by in this place. I shall, however, in the next chapter, give one more instance of the errors into which men fall, from the neglect of the great laws of the human mind, as, by doing this, I shall not only still further illustrate the importance of these laws, but shall perhaps help to remove objections and prejudices which would otherwise stand in the way of those doctrines and laws which I desire to establish in a future chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

SUPERNATURALISM *versus* SCIENCE

THE particular errors to which I alluded in the last chapter will be best seen, perhaps by a general contrast between what may be termed respectively Supernaturalism and Science, between those who hold that some revelation has been given to the world by a person or persons supernaturally sent or inspired and those who, like myself, believe that the only revelation the Supreme Power has given to man is the laws of the world and of the human mind. And in order that I may do no injustice to Supernaturalism in this comparison, I propose to take, as typical instance of it, the most coherent and intelligent form it has yet assumed, the form that is accepted by the most cultured minds, and that offers the fewest points of antagonism to modern thought, the form, in a word, that will best exemplify its true essence, freed from all those superstitions, impurities, and adhesions which are so obnoxious to the culture and enlightenment of the present day. Now, if we represent to ourselves in thought the respective exponents of these opposite views of the world, at the outset of their journey in search of Truth, we shall find that those feelings and necessities of the mind which it is their object to harmonize, are alike in both. Each starts forth equipped, on the one hand, with Conscience, and on the other, with the demand for Cause—the one being an affection of the feelings, the other a necessity of pure thought. But they do not get far on their way before it becomes apparent that, although neither Supernaturalist nor Scientist altogether ignores either of these two affections of the mind, the Supernaturalist lays more stress on the feeling—the conscience, the Scientist more stress on the

thought—the cause. And from this primal difference in the emphasis laid on thought and sentiment respectively, flow those subsequent divergencies which, widening as they go, at last become entirely antagonistic and irreconcilable. Let us follow for a moment our Supernaturalist and Scientist, and see how they fare as they pursue each his several way.

The Supernaturalist, with a natural leaning to piety and devoutness, feeling acutely the inward unrest, the remorse, the discord, which the consciousness of Sin and the conflict between his higher and lower nature have made habitual; yearning for deliverance from this unnatural condition, from this inward discord, this sense of longing and aspiration unsatisfied and unappeased; feels, by the deepest intuition of his mind, that there can be no desire implanted in the human breast but has its natural satisfaction somewhere; that the yearning of the child no more surely pre-supposes the mother's breast; hunger and thirst, food and water; the sexes, their opposites; and the bird his mate; than this restless yearning of the soul pre-supposes, somewhere in the wide world, if one could only find it, the provision for inward harmony and rest. On looking about him for some sign or token that shall lead him to the desired object, he feels that this sense of Sin in his own members, this Evil and misery in the world, must be referred to some commensurate cause, and to what else can it be referred but to some supernatural Evil Power or Devil, in whose chains, though struggling to be free, both he and it lie bound and captive. At the same time, he recognises that this very effort and desire to be free, this inward aspiration to good, as well as the bounteous provision of Nature for man's wants which he sees around him, necessitate a belief in some Good Power, or God, to whom alone they can legitimately be referred. But if this were all, if his inward unrest were due to the conflict of two opposing deities for his soul, there would be nothing for him (seeing that the Evil Power would seem to be in possession, and to have the strongest hold over him), but.

like the heathen or the slave, to do homage to the tyrant, to propitiate the Evil Deity by ceremonies, offerings, expiations, sacrifices and the like. And thus he sees to be the idea of the religion of the East, where the chief gods are evil, like Siva, and are worshipped by sacrifices, expiations, and oft-times by bloody and inhuman rites. This religion, then, is a religion of Fear, an attempt to get harmony and rest for the soul by appeasing the evil, rather than by aggrandizing the good, and is not a solution that he can accept as final. To deliver himself from this worship of Fear which he feels to be degrading and embroiling, and to attain to a worship of Reverence and Love which shall be ennobling, expanding, and elevating, is his main endeavour, but recognizing his own feebleness and inability to combat the great power of evil, he feels the necessity of some impulse, some spirit, being communicated to him, which shall so stimulate, encourage, and reinforce the good that is within him, as to enable it to overcome the evil. But how is this to be done? How, except by the Good Power himself appearing, as a great general, in person on the field of human life, taking on Himself the nature of man, submitting to the evils, the trials, and the temptations of life, nay even to death itself, and yet victoriously vanquishing the Devil at all points, conquering sin in himself, relieving evil and misery in others, and so, as our Great Exemplar, teaching us that it can be done, if we will only keep our souls at the same lofty level. But where to get the enthusiasm, the impetus, the spirit, the hope, necessary to enable us to do this. The belief itself that the great God has so loved us and taken compassion on us, that he has come down to help us, and given Himself to die for us, and the promise that when He is gone He will leave His spirit with us, is of itself sufficient to rouse into self-sacrificing devotion the nobler elements of our souls, to keep up the enthusiasm in our hearts, to nerve us for the struggle, to comfort us in defeat, and to give us assurance of final victory. Without such Incarnation, indeed, and Exemplar

how in this confused world could we know what to do or avoid, what standard of life to set up for ourselves where spiritual wickedness in high places so much prevails? How else but with this divine standard could we separate the wheat from the chaff? How could we believe in the possibility of conquering the evil in ourselves and others, or get heart to fight it, but that its defeat had already been accomplished? How sympathize with the lower races, the down-trodden and oppressed, except by the knowledge that He Himself adopted them as His brothers, and included them in the fatherhood of God? How know that the suffering of Humanity was not God's intention, but that He Himself came in human flesh and delivered them from it, by casting out devils, healing the sick, and the like? How find an answer to the natural longing of the mind for a future existence, except that by his resurrection and ascension He has given us the assurance that we too shall rise and be with the Father?

Such an incarnation as this, is precisely what the Supernaturalist feels would be necessary to give him that inward harmony and rest which he so sorely needs, and if, as he plods wearily along, tidings reach him that such has indeed occurred, that the God of Light has actually incarnated Himself in human form for his deliverance, will not the coincidence of the report with the *à priori* belief that it was the only way of escape for men, immensely strengthen its credibility? And if, moreover, the strictest examination of the historical record fails to shake the broad basis of fact on which it rests; if, further (judging the tree by its fruits), he finds that all other religions have either died out altogether, or degenerated into devil-worship, and the civilizations founded on them sunk into impotence or death, whereas the European civilizations, founded on Christianity, have gone on prospering without any signs of decay; and if, finally, all this corresponds with what Christ affirmed of Himself, viz., that He was the Light of the World, and that he would send His spirit, after He was gone

to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, has he not here such a correspondence of a *posteriori* with a *priori* considerations, as will justify him in giving to the Christian Revelation his full and undeserved assent?

Such is the course pursued, and the goal arrived at, by the Supernaturalist in his search for inward harmony and rest. And if, as a Scientist who takes his stand on the laws of the world, and of the human mind, I may be permitted to trace in a general way the course I have myself pursued, and the goal I have arrived at, I shall perhaps best illustrate the radical differences existing between these two opposite views of the world.

Starting out, like the Supernaturalist, in search of inward harmony, but with thoughts turned perhaps less to the state of my feelings than to the real relations and connexions of things, I, too, carried with me the consciousness of evil, of the inward conflict perpetually going on between high aspirations and low tendencies and desires and, in consequence, of discord within and without. Like him, too, I felt a yearning for inward peace, and for deliverance from sin, from low thoughts, base motives, and guilty desires. And, like him, I felt confident, by a deep intuition of my nature, that somewhere provision must be made for harmonizing this inward discord, that somewhere there must exist a Power that would enable men to confront evil with good, and gradually to overcome it, and so give them rest and harmony and peace. But at this point of my journey I part company with the Supernaturalist, and the further we go on our respective ways, the more divergent do our paths become.

The Supernaturalist being, as I have said, more concerned with the unsatisfactory state of his feelings than with the real relations and connexions of things, jumps naturally to the conclusion that the good he sees and feels within him and without him on the one hand, and on the other, the sin and evil in him self and the world, are due to the direct agency of God

and the Devil respectively ; and, accordingly, shifts the drama of human destiny from the natural to the supernatural world, from the world of *effects*, to the world of what to him are real *causes*, where the problem for solution is :—Given the soul of man as the prize of contention between God and the Devil (the Devil in the meantime having got man into his hands under protest, and holding him by force rather than by consent), how to reinforce man so as to enable him to shake off the Devil, recover his true allegiance, and thus find peace and rest for his soul? And the solution that the Supernaturalist finds credible and satisfactory is, as we have seen, that the Good God Himself has appeared on the field of human life, and that this fact, once recognised by men, will impart such enthusiasm and stimulus to their drooping and dispirited souls, as, like the appearance of some great general in the thick of the fight, will enable them to drive back the enemy, and recover that dominion of the soul which they had lost, and which was theirs by native birth-right. Now, while admitting that this method of cutting the Gordian-knot of human destiny, as in a Greek drama, by the appearance on the stage of human life of the *deus ex machina* in the shape of a Supernatural Power, was the most natural, harmonious, and satisfactory solution of the problem that could have been found at the time of its promulgation by St. Paul, I would remark that, at the present day, it can only be held as a satisfactory solution, by neglecting the effects on men's beliefs, of one of the greatest laws of the human mind—a law so wide and far-reaching in its consequence that like the law of gravitation, which for ever got rid of those supernatural agencies formerly believed to regulate the movements of the planets, when once it is received into the mind, and its full significance becomes apparent, it will topple the most harmonious, coherent, or symmetrical superstructure, of Supernaturalism to its base. The law I refer to, I have elsewhere called 'the law of wills and causes,' and in future chapters I shall have occasion to exhibit in fuller detail the

great part it plays in religious development. For the present, however, it will be sufficient to say, that what I mean by this law is, that when the natural or scientific causes and connexions of any phenomenon are unknown, it must be ascribed to the agency of wills like our own; but that when the natural laws and connexions become known, the phenomenon ceases to be ascribed to the agency of such wills. Now as at the time of Christ the mind of man was believed to be pure spirit, entirely disengaged from the body or the material organization of the brain, men were forced, by this natural law of the mind, to refer the sin and evil in themselves and others, to the direct agency of wills like their own, that is to say, to evil spirits, or, in a word, to the Devil; the accompanying remorse and sense of guilt being at the same time naturally regarded as the consequences of the injury or offence done to the Good Spirit, or God. But at the present day, the mind is known to be inseparably bound up with the material organization of the brain, and evil thoughts or deeds, in consequence, can no longer be legitimately referred to the agency of evil spirits; but, on the contrary, must be regarded as natural affections of the brain, acting under the various stimuli and temptations of life, according to their own proper laws; while remorse and the sense of sin, instead of pointing of necessity, as the Supernaturalist thinks, to a good Deity whom we have offended, and to whom we must become reconciled, are found to have their normal sphere of action primarily in the human beings around us whom we have injured or offended, and only secondarily to refer to the Deity, when we are conscious of having, by thought or act, run counter to the great ends which He is believed to be working out. But not only can the thoughts of the mind, which give rise to sin and evil, no longer be referred to the agency of an Evil Spirit, but a wider view of the world will make it apparent that these very thoughts themselves have no *positive* quality of evil, but are merely necessities which inhere in the ground-plan of the world.

The World is constructed on the principle of Individuation ; by which I mean that it is not lumped together as a whole, but is distributed into individual natures—animals, plants, human beings of every race, species, and variety—in the same way that the hand, to be more serviceable, is divided into individual fingers. And, whatever be its ultimate aim, whatever be the ultimate goal to which it is tending, it is plain that that intention and goal can only be worked out and arrived at, by the agency of these individual natures—animals, plants, and man. Such being the evident *ground-plan* of the world (for which, by the way, it is as useless to ask the reason as it would be to enquire why matter exists in the antagonistic forms of attraction and repulsion), one sees at a glance that it is a necessity, inherent in the original design, that there should be some special provision for maintaining this individuality, and preventing things from being agglutinated with, or absorbed into, one another. And so, indeed, there is. We find in animals, horns, hoofs, claws, fangs, stings, organs of offence and defence of every variety, all serving as mere instruments or *means* by which this ground-scheme of individuation is maintained. Now, a little reflection will show that corresponding to these horns, fangs, and stings in the lower animals, and to the appetites of fear, hunger, and self-preservation by which they are set in motion, is what we call the evil nature in man. Besides his coarse physical defences against enemies, man has the finer weapons of envy, pride, jealousy, revenge, and the like, which are merely these instruments of individuation and self-preservation carried up into the mind, and transmuted there into more subtle and flexible rapiers of attack or defence. Lesser men defend themselves from absorption by greater by means of envy, or hold their own against them by contradiction, combativeness, or pride. Vanity stimulates men to make the most of themselves, and helps them to keep up their individuality. Jealousy pricks them to hold their own against rivals ; revenge to make good again on an enemy the

injury he has done them; while sensual desire, working after its own natural laws, stimulates them to perpetuate this individuation by means of offspring having the like individuality, and so prevents things from sinking back again into that flat and undiversified desert of uniformity, out of which they had originally to struggle. And so, too, if we take the more positive and active sins of lying, stealing, murder, adultery, and the like, we may see that here also no new element has been introduced, but all are ways of aggrandizing ourselves and our own individuality at the expense of others; thus overstepping those conditions of fair play and justice which, in a *limited* world, are necessary to enable each to maintain his own individuality, and to escape being absorbed or annihilated by the other. If we tell lies, for example, we secure for ourselves a point of vantage which does not legitimately belong to us, if we steal, we do the same; and so, too, if we commit murder or adultery. Again, if we consider what the theologians would call 'sin in the inmost members,' lusts and desires that may go no farther than the mind of the person entertaining them, stopping short before they come to action—envy, impurity of thought, evil-wishing, suspicion, covetousness, selfishness, worldly-mindedness and the like—we shall find that at bottom they are only *imaginative* modes of protecting or aggrandizing our own individuality; although, if not restrained, they may keep pricking the imagination (where they can form infinite combinations) until, to relieve itself, it forces men into all sorts of unnatural cruelties and crimes; or they may so monopolize consciousness as to weaken the authority of those high and noble aspirations which we feel by their very quality to be the real and true ends of our being. But perhaps the strongest evidence that what we call Evil or Sin is merely the untempered and excessive exercise of activities that are necessary to the progress and development of the world (and therefore has not that *positive* quality which would justify us in assuming a special Devil to account for it), is to be found in this most

pregnant fact—that society has legitimatized and provided for the gratification, within due limits, of those very activities which in their excess constitute sin, but which, within these limits, cease to be sinful. If your sensual passions are strong, for example, you may marry, not commit adultery; if your desire for money, for worldly goods, and prosperities is keen, you may work for them, not steal them, or be covetous of the goods of others; if you have a high pride or ambition, a thirst for fame, you may attain it by good services done, or by the laudable exercise of your talents, not by envy and detraction. If you wish to be equal with the man who has wronged you, you can appeal to the law, not have recourse to murder or private revenge. And thus it is that the very same thoughts, passions, and impulses, which in excess have the special and positive quality of sin attached to them, and so are believed to require a Devil to explain them, when exercised in moderation, have no such positive quality, and require no such Deity. If it be urged, as by the old ascetics (and naturally enough in their stage of culture), that even this normal and legitimate exercise of the appetites, passions, and desires is sin, then all mental and bodily activities whatever, that are not directly and immediately connected with the highest ends of our being, must be Sin, however much they may be shown to be remotely and indirectly so connected; a view of life which would forbid us the normal enjoyment of our food, as much as the normal enjoyment of our ambition, emulation, or pride, and which, if carried into effect by the whole world—a test which any doctrine professing to be at once true and universal ought to stand—would speedily bring the world to an end. The Asceticism of the early Christian centuries in Europe was the normal and legitimate result of the Pauline form of Supernaturalism which then prevailed, and which, in theory at least, is held by all Christians at the present time. But the fact that no Christian scheme, except perhaps Catholicism, now recognizes asceticism in practice, proves

that the theory from which it sprang is felt to be untenable at the present time

But if the Evil in the world and the Sin in the heart are due merely to the *excessive* activity of functions both good and necessary in themselves, and so do not require a Devil to account for them, does it not follow, the Supernaturalist may ask, that the good that is in the world and man, is also due merely to the activity of other functions of the brain or mind, and so does not require a good deity or God to account for it? To this I would reply, that when once, by a wide oversight of the world we perceive that sin and evil are not *ends* in themselves, but are only *means* and *instruments* of that individuation which inheres in the very ground plan of nature, and when we see further, that, as I shall show in a succeeding chapter, the real end is the elevation enlargement and expansion of the individual mind (truth, love, beauty, and the like being *positive* qualities, and carrying in their own natures the evidence that they are the true *ends* of being) we are bound by the very necessities of thought to refer those ends of the world to a Supreme Power commensurate with them in nature and attribute—a Power whom we must regard as the true source of all that is within us and without us, including those very means and instruments which in excess produce what we call evil, but which are nevertheless indirectly conducive to the great ends of being

But whatever may be the nature of Good and Evil in themselves, the contradiction between them, it will be urged, still exists to cause discord and division within the soul, and provision must be somewhere found for restoring harmony. This is quite true, but mark how, after the above analysis, the terms of the problem of human destiny, to which we have to find the solution, have changed. Instead of being, as the Supernaturalist has it —Given the inward contradiction and discord in man's soul, caused by sin and the hold which the evil spirit or Devil has over him, how, by the *supernatural*

agency of the good spirit or God, so to reinforce man against the Devil and himself, as to bring harmony and rest to the soul—the terms of the problem are shifted to another plane altogether, and become as follows:—Given the preponderance of the *means* and *instruments* of life (which become sin and evil by that very preponderance) over the true *ends* of life—the enlargement, elevation, and expansion of our higher nature—to find in the mind or the world (the Supreme Power being always in the background of consciousness) those agencies that will enable us to bring good out of evil (and will so remove the inward contradiction and discord), that will give us hope and assurance of final victory, and, in joyous endeavour, harmony and rest. To the problem thus differently stated to meet the intellectual and spiritual wants of modern times, the remainder of this book will, I hope, help to furnish an answer. For the present, I will only say generally, that the great agent on which we must rely is Science, by which I understand that knowledge of the laws of the world and of the human mind, which alone can enable us to work in harmony with the Supreme Power, and towards the same great ends. It is Science that, by its application to life, has destroyed the two great scourges of the early world, famine and pestilence, or greatly diminished their frequency and severity. It is Science that, by its application to the arts, has given us all the comforts, conveniences, and luxuries of life. It is Science that, by its effects on religious dogmas, has indirectly gone a long way in destroying those religious persecutions, those international hatreds, and religious wars, which the modern world regards with almost as much horror as the pestilence itself. Again, if, as I shall endeavour to show in the next chapter, it is by the pressure of a more enlightened and moral Public Opinion—a public opinion that requires ever finer and finer ideals—over the *individual* mind and conscience, that the grosser forms of evil are coerced, made gradually less and less habitual, until at last they die out naturally, this more sensitive public opinion itself grows out of

wider ideas and ameliorated social conditions; and these in their turn result from those improved material conditions which Science and the arts have been gradually bringing about. And lastly, as, by a legitimate exercise of the idea of causation, we get (as a normal deduction from the plan of the world and the human mind) the belief in a Supreme Power, working slowly and steadily for high ends, and in a pre-determined course, athwart the manifold obstructions, contradictions, and confusions of Time, it is this conviction which, by rousing into enthusiasm all the higher and nobler parts of our nature harmonizes the mind, removes the internal contradictions, and gives us inward harmony and peace.

In thinking over these opposite views of the World, as represented by Supernaturalism and Science respectively, I am conscious that, to many minds, especially those of pious and devout tendencies, there will be more comfort and real consolation in believing that the Great Cause of All actually came down to this world, assumed a human form took on Himself our sins and miseries, died for us and succeeded in triumphantly vanquishing Sin and the Devil for us, than in representing Him to themselves as working more or less inscrutably behind a veil, and revealing himself only through the laws of the world and the human mind. The mind of man is so constituted that it is only by a definite *personality*, or what can be conceived as a definite personality, that it can be deeply moved, whether to sympathy or aversion, love or fear. I have no doubt that the contemplation of the sun and moon of the river, woods and fountains, was attended by a much more vivid and active sensation of love and reverence when they were believed to be the abodes of deities, or the haunts of sweet nymphs and goddesses, than now, when they are beheld in their naked reality, and, on the other hand, that tempests and comets gloomy caverns and old witches, were regarded with a more profound feeling of awe and aversion when they were believed to be the manifestations of divine anger, or the abodes

of evil spirits, than now, when they are regarded as only natural phenomena, untenanted abodes, or harmless old women. I can well imagine that Luther threw his ink-pot at the Devil with much more animus, believing that he saw him actually before him and trying to tempt him, than he would have done had he believed that what he saw was merely a spectral illusion, and that the thoughts which rose in his mind were merely the normal affections of his own mind and brain, working according to their proper and natural laws. But to tacitly assume, as the Supernaturalist does, that the power any particular 'scheme of salvation' has to satisfy the feelings of a certain number of persons, can afford any presumption in favour of its truth, especially when, like the legends of the saints and martyrs, it has taken such hold of the imagination, that men are too pleased and comforted by it to sift the evidence for or against it, is childish and absurd. A man might as well assume that the pleasure he felt on hearing that an immense fortune had been left him, was presumptive evidence of the truth of the report; or a woman assume that, because the complete harmony of her whole nature would be best subserved by the marriage-state, therefore the particular man who pleased and satisfied her imagination and heart, must necessarily be the one intended by nature for her. It is true that any longing or natural yearning must have its natural satisfaction somewhere, but not that the gratification felt in any special case is evidence that we have found the precise satisfaction alone intended for us; as hunger is presumptive evidence that food is good for us, but not that any particular kind of food is the only kind that is good for us; or as the sexual feeling is presumptive evidence that it is not good for man to be alone, but not that some particular person is the only one that it is good for him to marry. In the same way, the religious sentiment is presumptive evidence of the existence of an Unseen Power working behind phenomena, but not that any *special* conception we may have formed of the person and attributes of that

Power is the correct one. The state of our feelings, then, cannot be presumptive evidence in favour of the truth of any special doctrine, when once that doctrine has become discredited by a deeper insight into the world and the human mind. To sit harmonizing the discordant intuitions of the sense of sin, by the introduction into the mind of sweet and beautiful *personalities* and affections is easy, but unfruitful, to laboriously strive to know the laws of the world and of the human mind and, with the sense of a Supreme Power above you, to go out into the harsh world and strive to further them, and to act in accordance with them, is difficult but fruitful and ennobling.

And thus it is that even the highest, purest, and most harmonious form of Supernaturalism that has yet appeared, the one least obnoxious to Modern Thought, and which looked so reasonable at the outset and indeed was entirely satisfactory, harmonious, and complete at the time of St Paul can only be held at the present day, by deliberately neglecting one of the greatest laws of the human mind—the law by which, when the natural causes of things are unknown, men are bound to refer them to the agencies of wills like their own.

Before proceeding to consider still further the general divergencies between Supernaturalism and Science—between those who would solve the problem of life by means of supernatural agents brought down into the arena of human life, and those who would do so by means of the laws of the world reverently learned and conformed to, with the recognition of a Supreme Power working through them alone to the accomplishment of His great ends—perhaps I may be allowed to recapitulate and still further enforce what I have already said. We saw, then, that both Supernaturalist and Scientist pay homage to the two sides of our nature—Feeling and Thought—but that the Supernaturalist attaches more importance to the state of his feelings, than to the true laws and connexions of things, while the Scientist, on the contrary, looks first to see that he

has got the true laws and connexions of things, and afterwards considers how they are adapted to meet the wants and desires of his heart. And we saw that it is from this original difference in the stress laid on sentiment and thought respectively, that all those after-consequences flow, which I shall now endeavour briefly to trace.

I am, of course, aware, and shall in a later chapter endeavour to show, that the intellectual framework of Religion is constructed or evolved along certain definite intellectual lines and principles; but what I mean when I say that the Supernaturalist lays more stress on Emotion and Sentiment than on Thought is, that when once religions have been constructed, credence is generally asked for them or given to them, by reason of their power to satisfy certain longings of the heart, rather than on any purely intellectual grounds. That this is the tendency of all supernaturalisms may be gathered from the expressed opinion of so acute a thinker as Cardinal Newman, who says:— ‘Popular religion is founded in one way or another on the sense of sin.’ And again, ‘The sense of the Infinite Goodness of God, and of our own misery and need, would, in those who feel keenly, be sufficient to create a belief in any religion offering itself where there was no rival in the field.’ And this is as good as to say that the state of the sentiments and emotions is of such primary importance, that the fact that any religion would harmonize them, would be sufficient of itself to create a belief in that religion. Now, one would know beforehand, that any religion or scheme of the world that appealed to feeling only as the test of its truth, must be hollow and uncertain. For it is the very law of our being that what we are to believe must in the last resort be decided by the intellect alone, and that only after the intellect has shown us what is to be believed, are our feelings justified in offering response or protest. The conscience, for example, is a feeling, but what is right or wrong under any given circumstances must be left for the judgment to determine, after taking in all the conditions of the case. It is the judg-

ment, too, that must determine to whom our conscience owes allegiance, whether to the men and women about us, or to the Deity whom we have offended, or both. Love, too, is a feeling, but whom or what we ought to love, is a matter entirely for the judgment to decide. But the Supernaturalist's hope of determining the truth of any particular religion by its effect on his feelings, is as absurd as to attempt to determine, from the effect any incident or story has on our feelings, whether it is true or not. And the first result that follows from this excess of emphasis laid on feeling is, that no scheme of supernaturalism can ever become universal. Starting from the Conscience and the sense of Sin, every age or nation, according to its stage of culture, would require a different form of religion to satisfy it. And there being no background of demonstrable fact by which to test the truth of any religion this would have to be determined by the power each had to harmonize the feelings and meet the wants of man. And as every people and nation receives equal comfort and satisfaction from its own belief, ritual, form of worship and the like, there is no reason why the Mahomedan should relinquish his religion for Buddhism, or the Buddhist for Mahomedanism or Christianity. On the contrary, as it is largely a matter of personal taste and comfort, what satisfies the conscience and longing of the Brahmin, will not satisfy the Buddhist, what satisfies the conscience of the Catholic will not satisfy the Protestant, and what suits the old school of Calvinism, will not suit the latest school of Broad Christianity. The fact is Supernaturalism, by its very nature (as taking its stand rather on conscience and feeling than on demonstrable truth, and so making that true which harmonizes and satisfies the feelings), would, if not counteracted, divide men down to the last man. For as there are no two men whose feelings and personal wants are in every way precisely alike, so when a religion is run out to its full detail or doctrine and ritual, there is no reason, as indeed may be seen in the multiplication of Protestant sects, why any two persons should

feel precisely alike about it; and nothing, therefore, to prevent men splitting into as many opinions as there are individuals, were it not indeed for that sheep-like tendency to go in herds, which is as characteristic of men as their tendency to differ in detail. And, moreover, as each and all of these concrete religions and schemes of salvation involve the acceptance of some fact or facts alleged to have occurred in the past, their truth can never be brought to an actual test, so as to convince dissentients or unbelievers; and therefore, as I have shown in the chapter on Cardinal Newman, they can command no true and legitimate assent, but are inferences only, of more or less probability. Indeed, so deeply does Cardinal Newman himself feel the difficulty of gaining assent to the 'Evidences of Christianity,' that he candidly admits that, were it not for the support they receive from the power of Christianity to meet all the wants of our nature, it would be almost impossible. Here, for example, are the beliefs and feelings which he makes a *sine quâ non* in the enquirer, before he can hope that the evidences for the truth of Christianity will carry conviction with them:—"a belief and perception of the Divine Presence, a recognition of His attributes, and an admiration of His person as viewed under them, a conviction of the worth of the soul and of the reality and momentousness of the Unseen World, an understanding that in proportion as we partake in our own persons of the attributes which we admire in Him, we are dear to Him, a consciousness on the contrary that we are far from partaking them, a consequent insight into our own guilt and misery, an eager hope of reconciliation to Him, a desire to know and love Him, and a sensitive looking out in all that happens, whether in the course of Nature or of human life, for tokens, if such there be, of His bestowing on us what we so greatly need." That is to say, certain beliefs and states of feeling are made the grounds for giving assent to doctrines and facts which, unsupported, would not of themselves carry conviction; and this illustrates one of the central fallacies of Supernaturalism, the

belief, viz, *that the satisfaction of the feelings is proof of the truth of the doctrine*

Again, the same scheme which in one age of the world was found perfectly credible by a particular class of minds, in another age is quite incredible to the same class of minds. The miracles of the Old and New Testament, for example, were perfectly credible to men living at the time these books were written, for at that time men naturally expected miraculous interpositions, to eke out the explanation of occurrences of which the natural laws were then unknown. The like miracles would be perfectly credible even at the present day to the inhabitants of India, and for the same reason. But these miracles are discredited by the cultured minds of Europe to day, simply because they run counter to that order and uniformity of the laws of Nature which with them is the first article of faith. Even within living memory there have been great changes of belief in regard to most of the leading tenets of Christianity, articles that fifty years ago were considered essential to the faith having been either dropped altogether since that time, or so modified and derided as to be unrecognizable, although, owing to the absolute and unchangeable character which attaches to Revelation, obvious doctrines cannot be openly discarded when the age has outgrown them, but must be silently put out of the way and allowed to pine and linger until they at last slip quietly into oblivion.

What grieves me most, personally in the perpetuation of Supernaturalism among cultivated men is, that it splits the little band of spiritual thinkers into two unsympathetic, and more or less secretly hostile, camps. Laying so much more stress on emotion and feeling than on purely intellectual perception, the Supernaturalist naturally looks at the phenomena of the world more with an eye to their effects on religious feeling, than as pure truth entirely disengaged from any special forms of emotion whatever. And hence the tendency I have so often noticed in even the most intelligent and cultured

supernaturalists, to disparage not only the men of science, but the great spiritual thinkers who, like Emerson, for example, regard all the laws of the world and of human life with equal sympathy, loving them for themselves alone, without regard to their special bearings on piety and devotion. And as a result of this narrow range of intellectual sympathies, there is in Supernaturalism no tendency to expansion or development. When once the Supernaturalist has made up his mind, as he has at the present time, that the civilization of Europe to-day is due to the Spirit of Christ, which has all along been working in the minds of men, athwart all impediments of war, bloodshed, and crime, he can go no farther; and you will look in vain to him for any finer analysis of the mingled elements which have gone to make up that great result. Believing that civilization is the result of the Spirit which Christ promised to leave in the world after he had gone, he secretly discourages all accurate and scientific investigations, founded on observed laws of the world and the human mind, into the respective parts played in it by various forms of Government, by different material and social conditions, by religious dogmas, and by science and the arts respectively; much in the same way as the metaphysical biologists, with their 'vital principle' and the like, stood in the way of a finer and more accurate analysis of physiological relations; or as those mediæval physicians who, believing that diseases were due to evil spirits within the body, prescribed those parts of frogs, beetles, and spiders which they thought contained spirits antagonistic to those they wished to expel, and felt no desire for any finer and more scientific analysis of the real causes of disease.

And, lastly, however much the Supernaturalist may have minimized the difficulties which stand in the way of the acceptance of his scheme, by removing the more glaring anomalies—the miracles, the plenary inspiration, the Mosaic account of creation, and the like—he still is obliged to bring the supernatural Power on to the world's stage, and to remove Him again

from it, and therefore, however much he may desire to keep the miraculous in the background, in deference to modern habits of thought (as the slaughter house is kept in the background in deference to modern refinement), he cannot dispense with at least three miracles—the miraculous conception, the resurrection, and the ascension. And although he maintains that for so great an object as the salvation of man these departures from the ordinary laws of Nature are justifiable, and quite credible, nevertheless the fact that he feels it almost necessary to apologise for retaining them, shows how far he feels himself to be drifting away from modern habits of thought. And furthermore, when we remember that the fact itself of an Incarnation could only have been entirely believable when Science was in its infancy, it is evident that the Supernaturalist, in not perceiving this, has neglected the effect on religious belief of that law of the mind whereby, when the natural causes of phenomena are unknown, they are attributed to wills like our own, and so leaves his theory of the world stranded and dismantled on the shore of the ever receding tide of Mediocrism.

If we turn now to a religion that is founded on the laws of the world and the human mind—on Science physical and mental—we shall see that it is free from all the objections I have just urged against the religion of the Supernaturalist. Instead of laying more emphasis on feeling than on thought, and making that religion true which harmonizes them, it lays the stress on the real and true relations of things, and would make the feelings adapt to these relations. Instead of, like Supernaturalism, tending to divide men down to the last man, owing to the difficulty of finding any two with tastes and feelings quite alike, it tends to unite men to the last man, owing to the fact that every new law of Nature, once verified and registered, becomes a bond of union among men in opinion and practice. For the truth of its doctrines it does not, like Supernaturalism, depend on whether certain alleged historical facts

are true or not, but rests on laws which can be verified at any time or in any place, and which are true alike yesterday, to-day, and for ever. It can, therefore, command a full and complete assent of the mind, and is not attended by the unsecure feeling of vague and uncertain *probability*. Unlike Supernaturalism, again, which is constantly dropping along the line of its course articles that were once essential to the faith, or modifying them until they are unrecognizable, a religion founded on Science changes, not by dropping old fictions, but by adding new truths. It is capable, therefore, of endless development as the discovery of new laws enables us to work it up into finer and finer issues. In its interpretation of the world it does not remain fixed and rooted, or lay claim to that finality and *absolute* character which, by the necessity of the case, must characterize all religions founded on revelation: it does not narrow all human interests, all the varied play of human life and passion, down to their effects on piety and devotion; but, on the contrary, it is open to the reception of all laws whatever—physical, mental, spiritual. In a word, it does not, like Supernaturalism, repress, but gives range and expansion to the human spirit. It makes no demands on our faith, by asking us to accept miracles in any form, and so, unlike Supernaturalism, has no tendency to split the mind in twain, to set reason against faith, and experience against authority. It recognizes the law of wills and causes, and so, while setting aside all supernaturalisms whatever, sympathizes with them, understands them, and accounts for them. But enough of these contrasts, which might be carried on indefinitely, and which I have introduced here to bring to a focus the irreconcilable differences between Supernaturalism and Science, in their ways of looking at the world and human life; feeling, with Carlyle, that until the “exodus from Houndsditch” is satisfactorily accomplished, there can be no single and undivided effort made to forward the great cause of Civilization and Progress.

PART II.—THE GOAL.

CHAPTER I.

HOW IS CIVILIZATION POSSIBLE?

BEFORE we can estimate the effects of Religions, forms of Government, and Material and Social Conditions generally, on civilization and human welfare, it is necessary that we should first determine the great *moral end* which these exist to realise, the great ideal towards which each step in legislation should be an approximation. By many this will be regarded as of little more practical moment than the question of the climate of Jupiter, or the nature of the sun's atmosphere. It is generally agreed that, besides the primary duty of keeping order and administering justice, Government exists to promote what is called the general good—material, moral, and intellectual. But what the general good specially is, or how it is best promoted, is a point on which there are the widest differences of opinion—differences that disclose themselves the moment that any great legislative measure is brought forward for discussion. For while all admit that there is an ideal which government should strive to realise, and towards which legislation should be directed, prejudice, passion, and self-interest so enter into men's practical conception of this ideal, that unanimity in regard to it seems almost unattainable. Hence the necessity of finding some principle which, by its harmony with the constitution of the world, shall have not only the force of Science, but the sanction of Religion; and which shall thereby give focus and direction to the conflicting efforts

made for the public good. Not that I imagine that were such a principle established beyond even the reach of controversy, the world would be in any great haste to carry it into effect. Indeed, were it as clear as gravitation, and as demonstrable as the propositions of Euclid, men would still prefer to follow their own particular aims, interests, and ambitions; for if self-interest could not blind them to the truth of the principle, it would at least persuade them to disregard it. A good instance of this is seen in the Christian religion. What religion was ever more firmly believed? What was ever upheld by more powerful incentives and deterrents? What could boast of a truer and nobler ideal than that contained in its central precept of loving your neighbour as yourself? And yet at what time during the nineteen centuries of its existence have men preferred the welfare of their neighbour to their own, or when smitten on one cheek have turned the other also? The truth is, there is no way in which you can make the moral sentiment supreme of itself alone; no way in which you can make the pyramid of human life, which rests on a broad basis of self-interest, stand on its apex of self-renunciation, of public and impersonal effort. I do not, of course, ignore the individual conscience. I do not doubt its vast influence on human life, nor deny its supremacy over individual minds, and during pregnant crises of personal or national life. I merely observe that it is naturally *weaker* than the selfish instincts of our nature, and unless reinforced from without must bend before the solicitations of self-interest. The result is, that, if left to themselves, men would push their own interests to the detriment of the general weal; and life would become a scramble, in which justice and right would be at the mercy of brute force or individual caprice. The question then is—how has justice been done in the world, how has civilization been advanced, the hardships of life ameliorated, and the general good promoted? In a word, how, as Carlyle says, out of a universe of knaves to get an honesty from their united action? The answer, in a

void is—by the pressure put on the moral nature of each individual by the general conscience of the community. But the way in which this is done is so indirect, and the consequences that flow from it are so far-reaching both on thought and action, that I am tempted to devote a few words to its consideration.

Notwithstanding the preponderance of the lower instincts of our nature, and their tendency to overpower the higher sentiments, each man has within him an ideal of right and justice, to which in his heart of hearts he does homage and which he longs to see realised in the world. And although he habitually falls below this ideal in his own life and character, it nevertheless serves as the gauge and standard by which he measures his neighbour. It differs of course, in different ages and nations, and in different stages of civilization and culture, but for persons living at the same time, in the same community, it is practically the same. Held thus in common by many minds, it takes form and embodiment, not only in that code of public law which regulates the civil and commercial intercourse of a people, but also in that unwritten code which takes cognisance of those social misdemeanours which lie beyond the reach of positive law. In this way it becomes the public conscience—the organ of right and justice, before which all bow, and to which all appeal. Now it is by the pressure put on the moral nature of the individual by this public conscience—this public sentiment—that the triumph of justice is secured. It is this public conscience which restrains men when they are tempted to push their own interests to the detriment of their fellows. Rising from the flower and ideal of each mind, like a refreshing aroma, it envelops the community in an atmosphere of justice and right, which all inhale, and from which all renew their strength and virtue. In a certain sense it may be called the good genius of man for it is the power by which he is enabled to lift himself above himself. All have within them the Ideal of which this Public Conscience is the embodiment, all alike fall

below it in the rough conflicts and temptations of the world; but when it looks out on us in sympathy or anger from the eyes and hearts of our fellow-men, we bend in awe before the august manifestation, and subordinate our inclinations to its dictates. We may find illustrations of this truth in the commonest incidents. In street fights, for example, I have noticed that the combatants, when thoroughly roused, have a tendency to press their advantages to a point beyond the bounds of right, and that they are only restrained by the consciousness of being surrounded by a ring of spectators who will see fair play done. In cases like this, the justice is not in the combatants, but in the spectators. In the combatants it is overpowered for the moment by passion and self-interest; in the ring of spectators, free and unbiassed, it sits enthroned. Next day, perhaps, the combatants themselves may stand around as spectators at a similar exhibition, and will help to see justice done in like manner. Now, this street fight, with its ring of spectators, exhibits in miniature the way in which Justice is done and civilization advanced in this world. In all men it is latent and potential; but it is active and effective only in that ring of Public Sentiment, which surrounds the conflicts of persons and classes, and to which all tacitly appeal. Each of the persons who make up this sentiment is, perhaps, a frail and imperfect creature, and he that is without sin may well cast the first stone; and yet each contains within himself the Ideal, which, when embodied in moral and social law, is not only the greatest incentive to virtue, but the greatest deterrent from vice. It has been observed that men who habitually break the Ten Commandments, both in word and action, and who are fully aware of their own shortcomings, will nevertheless hurl these same commandments at the heads of their erring neighbours. Their neighbours return the compliment, with interest perhaps, and the result is that all are kept up to a higher standard of conduct and life. The critic who is incapable of realizing his own ideal, either in prose or verse, nevertheless,

by his vigilance helps to keep the lines and sentiments of the great poet from falling into that slovenly condition to which otherwise they would be prone. Even the tea table gossip of old women of both sexes has its beneficent aspects, and in the economy of Nature is not to be despised. The truth is, no matter how high a man's aims may be, unless he is watched by the general sentiment of right in the community, he is almost sure to run into selfishness and injustice. Indeed, the more he is wrhipped up in his object, and the greater the ardour with which he pursues it, the greater tendency has he to disregard the means by which it is attained, and to select them for their fitness and expediency rather than their strict justice. When I see a noble cause advocated with power and enthusiasm by men who employ means unworthy of their great argument, I say to myself, these men are not necessarily insincere, but rather in the heat of the contest, and in their ardour to reach their end, they have been betrayed into meanness and injustice and so, by the side of their pure and lofty ideal, appear poor and deformed. Recognizing this, and perceiving the impossibility of carrying any great work unsullied through the storms of obloquy and opposition with which it is almost sure to be assailed, men like Carlyle have been tempted once for all to acquit their heroes of many delinquencies, because the ends at which they aimed were great and noble. Hence the one sided estimates of Frederick the Great, Mirabeau, and Frederick Wilhelm. Religion herself, even, the most sacred of all causes, is brought into disfavour by the ardour of her votaries, her cause suffering duly from those sectarian wranglings which are as unseemly and contemptible as the combats of flies in the air, and which, the more fiercely they are contested the more unchristian is the spirit in which they are waged. If men are thus betrayed into selfishness and injustice when in pursuit of ends that are *public* and impersonal, much more so will they be when in pursuit of their own *private* and selfish interests merely. Indeed, were there no moral atmosphere, no public sentiment

in which the Ideal was embodied as an active and ever-present force, victory would follow the line of greatest power, and society would be given over to the arbitrament of brute force. But the ring of men and women, whose interests in each particular case are not directly affected, stand around as representatives of the Ideal, of the True, and by the weight they throw into the scale in the unequal contest between Might and Right, Justice is made to prevail.

From the above considerations it will naturally follow, that if any one class or order in the State is sufficient of itself to overpower all the rest combined, there can be no effective Public Conscience; and legislation accordingly will follow the interests of the dominant power. The history of the world has familiarized us with the spectacle of autocrats subordinating the welfare of nations to their imperious wills. At Rome, where the personal whims of the emperors were erected into imperial decrees, justice had to come, if it came at all, as a gift, a condescension; mercy and charity, as sputters or bubbles merely in the full-blooded tide of imperial passion. In England, from the Revolution of '88 to the time of the first Reform Bill, the aristocracy were the supreme and predominant power in the State, and legislation accordingly followed the interests of that powerful body. But since that time the preponderance of power has been in the hands of the middle classes, and legislation in consequence (as we may see in the repeal of the Corn Laws, in the Education Act, and in the Irish Land Act) has been busied with attempts to restore the balance of justice. While then the effective organ of justice, viz., public sentiment, is absent in autocracies and oligarchies, it is present and active in Parliamentary governments, where majorities rule, and all the various interests of the nation are fairly represented. For although members are returned to represent *interests*—primarily those of their party, and secondly those of one or other industry or locality—and legislation in consequence has a tendency, as we so constantly see, to follow the line of power rather than of

justice, nevertheless, there is always a ring of outlying members, disinterested, conscientious, and backed by public feeling who stand around as a palladium to guard the right, a barrier over which injustice cannot ride, a court not to be bribed or bent. The House of Lords, even, is a good illustration of the same principle. For when not engaged on questions of privilege, *status* or land, it is a most honourable and disinterested public body, but the moment these, its dearest interests, are touched or threatened, members lose their heads, and become as impotent for ends of justice as so many Old-Bailey barristers.

And here the object of the chapter comes more distinctly into view. For if Justice is done, and Civilization rendered possible, by the pressure put on the moral nature of each individual by the *general* conscience of the community (through the concentration of individual ideals in a common sentiment of right), it is evident how supremely important it is that the *general* community should be instructed, in order that its moral judgments may be true and sound. When rival interests, for example, are clamouring for 'free trade' and 'fair trade' respectively, and victory is at the mercy of the most powerful influence, how important it is that the *public* should be instructed in the great principles of Political Economy, in order that it may interpose, and by the weight it throws into the scale, turn legislation in the right path. These and many other like instances that might be adduced, teach us the importance of indoctrinating the public mind with true principles, and of giving to practical politics a wider horizon of scientific thought.

CHAPTER II.

THE END OF CIVILIZATION.

THE first great question that must be scientifically determined—the question into which all others finally merge—is, what is the goal of Civilization, and in consequence the *end* at which all Government should aim? It is evident that until this is settled, we cannot tell whether any particular religion, institution, or principle of government, is good or bad, because we cannot tell whether it really forwards or retards the true end. Did political parties not differ so widely as to the end to be attained by legislation, they would not differ so widely in the means they employ. But once determine the true end, by a just insight into the laws of the world and the human mind, we can then proceed to estimate the effects of different creeds, institutions, and forms of government on that end. We can determine also the effects of those smaller changes in legislation which are constantly arising, and which are insensibly affecting the constitution of States. We get, in short, a deeper than scientific, viz., a religious basis, for our political aspirations; we animate society with a living principle, and have already taken the first step towards attaining unanimity in the means employed to realise it. As the pole-star to the confused mariner, so a great political aim, running in a line with the real tendencies of Nature, gives to the embarrassed thinker a steady light by which to steer.

Now, all political schemes whatever, whether they be practical or speculative, have consciously or unconsciously as their object, one or other of the following ends—either the order, symmetry, and durability of *society as a whole*, or the elevation and expansion of the *individual* mind. Those who support the

one, would subordinate the enlargement and elevation of the individual to the order and symmetry of society as a whole; those who support the other, would postpone the symmetry and order of society to the elevation and expansion of the individual. The one would make each man a mere cog or wheel in the vast organized mechanism of society, the other would make him conversant with the highest his nature is capable of, and would make room for him to expand to the utmost limit of his being. Accordingly, the watchword of the one is Order, of the other, Progress; of the one, Despotism (more or less disguised perhaps), of the other, Liberty. The one would tighten the bonds that keep man dependent on and subservient to man, the other would relax them. The one preaches a religion of social duty; the other of individual expansion and enlargement. Among recent political thinkers, Comte and Carlyle have taken their stand on the one, Emerson, Mill, and Spencer on the other. In the present chapter, I shall endeavour to show that the ends of the latter are more in harmony with the constitution of the world and the nature of man than the former—that, in short, *the elevation and expansion of the individual is the goal of Civilization, the true aim of Government*, as indeed it is the end to which Nature works. This position I shall support, directly, by considerations drawn from observations of life and Nature, and, indirectly, by tracing the principles of the opposite school to their roots in the human mind, and pointing out the great laws of life which they have neglected—laws which neglected must doom all schemes founded in disregard of them to the limbo of utopia.

On taking a wide survey of the world, nothing is more striking than the efforts made by all creatures to fulfil the law of their existence—to secure the free and unimpeded play of every power and native impulse, and to make for themselves room to expand to the full compass of their being. All alike, animals and men, are seen struggling for this much-desired end—the contests in which they are engaged being but a way

ment It has not as yet, it is true, been realised by the world, but is the glorious fruit which the civilizations of the ages have been slowly ripening Legislation, accordingly, should open up a way for its realisation, as the protecting sheath opens out before the expanding flower Unless, indeed, provision is somewhere made for expansion, no system of government can endure, but must either explode in revolutions, or sink into ruin and decay To what, for example, is the stagnant condition of India, with its swarming millions, due, but to that system of Caste which, leaving no room for individual character and genius to climb, reduces man to the condition of a thing, and of his immortal spirit makes a base and a material tool merely? To be free to develop every side of our nature according to the infinite variety and subtlety of genius and aspiration, that is expansion, that is liberty

✓ That the expansion and elevation of the individual is the end of Nature, and therefore of Civilization and Government, is seen also in the *ideals* and admirations of men Whom do men admire and aspire to know, whom do they desire to cultivate as acquaintances, or embrace as friends and companions? Those worthy souls whose spirits have been broken by hardship or oppression, and who seem to live only to obey and 'to do their duty in the sphere of life to which it has pleased God to call them?' Not these, but those who are kings of themselves and their own thought, and who are accustomed to follow in action the movements of their own free and unconstrained wills. What virtues can irradiate the man who bends the knee, or betrays in his manners and bearing the cloven hoot of servility? Who would make the tone and habit of mind of a flunkey the model for imitation, or his manners the glass in which to dress oneself? Who would make an ideal of a slave, however virtuous he might be? Even the poor and honest church goer, with his life of duty and devotion—where are the admirers who strew flowers in his path, or present him with beautiful memorials of their esteem? But let a man

Even women, whose admiration is on the whole, perhaps, the best index of the qualities Nature wishes to prevail, love the dignified, large, and magnanimous nature, better than the strictly rigid and conscientious one. Now, the reason for all this is, that what in common parlance is called duty, is not the end of the world. It is merely a means, not an end at all. It is the ligament which keeps society together at each and every point in its progress, but it has no creative force, no initiative power, and consequently cannot assist society in its development to a higher state. The Ten Commandments, which are the highest embodiment of duty, only maintain the *status quo*, the existing order, and if left to themselves would perpetuate it indefinitely. Feudalism would be here to-day, and the serf would be still bound to the soil, so far as what is called duty is concerned. The castes of the East, with their degrading views of human life and human dignity, would lie and stagnate to all eternity, undisturbed by duty. Despotism, the divine right of kings, and all the out-worn rubbish of other days, were still with us, for all that mere duty would have to say against them. Would the slave have been free to-day had he merely asked what his duty in life was? He would have been told that his duty was to obey his master, and to remain satisfied in the sphere of life to which it had pleased God to call him. But it was because men saw that the end of life was the expansion and elevation of the individual, and not the mere perpetuation of the *status quo*—the mere regularity of the State-machine—that they ruptured the bonds of the slave and set him free. In those moments of expansion, when the human spirit, stirring like an Enceladus under the mountain of routine, upturns the old landmarks of custom, the torpid incumbents of prescription and privilege, startled from their night-sleep on their ancient boughs, shriek in dismay, Confiscation! Sacrilege! But has it not always been held right and necessary that we should sacrifice a lower duty to a higher one, the lower one of order, to the higher one of expansion and liberty? Indeed,

save the order and symmetry of the whole. It is the first end of Nature that provision should be made for the fullest unfolding of every power and native instinct—why should man alone be denied this universal prerogative, and go to the grave with his best powers locked up in painful obstruction, forbidden to see them unfolded, his only chance of communing with the Universal being through the faded relics of some outworn creed?

generalities that obscure his real plan, and examine its true bearing, we shall find that each of its parts is so constructed as to promote the order and stability of society as a whole, at the expense of individual expansion and enlargement. In saying that Comte has gone far towards sacrificing progress to order, I do not mean to infer that he was indifferent to progress. On the contrary, he has declared, that order and progress are both equally necessary to the welfare of society. But order and progress, although equally necessary, are, like the poles of a battery, mutually opposed, and, in consequence, it is as difficult to hit both with equal directness by one scheme as by one blow to hit two objects that lie in opposite directions. For, just as the harmonious movements of the stars are secured, not by one compound force, but by the two opposite centrifugal and centripetal forces, so the orderly progress of States is best secured by the existence of two political parties each of which is pledged to one side alone. If no one scheme, then, can hit with equal directness both order and progress the only alternative for a speculative thinker is to decide which of these ends he thinks most important, to aim at that, and trust that the other will be hit in the rebound. Comte preferred order, and his choice drew after it the same artillery of means as if it had been his exclusive aim. For it may be laid down as a law that although in practical life you can temper your principles to the exigencies of the occasion, it is impossible to do so in any general scheme of life constructed without reference to time, place, or circumstance. A good instance of this is seen in the teaching of Carlyle and Emerson. These eminent Thinkers both saw that men on the one hand were radically *alike* in their essential natures, and on the other that they were *unlike* in their range of thought and sentiment. But to lay out a scheme of life and conduct that would equally embrace the opposite truths was not possible. They were obliged accordingly to choose which they would prefer to satisfy—the identity or the diversity. Emerson chose the identity or

likeness of man as the basis of his teaching, Carlyle the diversity. The consequence was that Emerson's teaching ran into the extreme of liberty, Carlyle's into the extreme of despotism. So, too, with Comte. Having made Humanity as a whole the centre both of his religious and his social system, he was bound to subordinate the expansion of the individual to the symmetry and stability of society as a whole, until, at last, by the very nature of things, he was driven into drawing the cords of order so tight as to strangle individual expansion and development.

With these preliminary observations I now propose to examine Comte's political and social scheme, with the view of pointing out the great laws of human life which he has neglected. But, before we can grasp his scheme in its logical completeness, we must discover the reasons for his making Humanity the central point of his system. Previous to his time there was no general science of Sociology; that is to say, no general laws had been discovered to which the progress and development of Mankind as a whole could be referred. Humanity at large was regarded much in the same way as a flight of crows or a forest of trees is regarded, viz., as a mere aggregate of isolated individuals. And as each of these individuals was liable to be moved by influences—supernatural and other—which defied all law and calculation, no one was likely to dream that a Science of Society was possible. But from the time when it began to appear that these supernatural conceptions themselves were the products of human thought; that they were not capricious and casual, but followed a regular course and order of development, men began to entertain the hope that great general laws might be discovered to which the total movements of Humanity could be shown to conform. Comte professed to have discovered these laws, and to have marked out the stages through which mankind has passed in its course and development, and so, for the first time, was enabled to figure Humanity, not as a mere *aggregate* of

isolated individuals, but as a *unity*, an *organism*, a *life*. Hence, it is that he represents Humanity as a Great Being, and pictures it as some immense mammal which in its growth and development has come down from the Past and is stretching onward into the Future, the individual being but a cell or molecule in its huge frame. And just as it is only the animal organism as a whole that can be regarded as a real entity, the cells of which it is composed having no distinct independent life, so Comte constantly repeats that 'Humanity is the only real existence, the individual being a mere metaphysical abstraction.'

Such is the train of thought by which Comte arrives at his conception of Humanity as a Great Being, and by which he makes it, and not the individual, the centre of his system. Now, from this conception and from the analogies that exist between Humanity and other vital organisms, his whole scheme of social reorganization may be logically deduced. A few broad instances will suffice to make this apparent. In the animal body, for example, the organs, tissues, and cells of which it is composed do not exist on their own account, but to do the special work assigned them, they are not independent and unrelated, but have vital connexions with every other part, and are kept in strict subordination to the welfare of the body as a whole. So, in Comte's scheme, the special classes and individuals of which society is composed have each to do the special work assigned them, and keep themselves strictly subordinated to the welfare of society as a whole. Priests and bankers, manufacturers and merchants, women and working-men, have each their respective functions minutely defined by him—functions not to be altered except at the behests of high necessity. For, just as any attempt on the part of an organ or tissue to set up for itself and to do as it pleased, would end in the disruption of the body, so any attempt on the part of an individual to follow the bias of his own genius or character would, Comte thinks, end in the disruption of society. Accord-

ingly, he preaches the *duty* of each individual to occupy the position assigned him, not the *right* of every man to choose his own path according to the secret impulses of his nature. Liberty and the Rights of Man, he thinks, lead to anarchy, and are therefore to be repressed. His new watchword is, 'Duties, not Rights.' But as the power of deciding what particular function a man is to fulfil must be vested in the hands of one or more persons, the scheme, as we should expect, ends in despotism. For it is the essence of despotism that the lives and fortunes of men should be placed, not in the hands of Fate and Nature, with their just and equal laws, but in the hands of some poor creature like ourselves, who, ignorant of himself perhaps, impudently professes to gauge the hidden depths and capacities of other souls, and with easy assurance proceeds to distribute them into the niches they are best fitted to occupy.

But this analogy between Humanity and the animal organism is carried by Comte still further into his scheme of social re-organization. He figures the animal body as made up of two distinct and independent sets of organs—the nutritive and the cerebral—which have distinct and independent functions. The nutritive organs consist of lungs, heart, liver, and other tissues, and carry on the nutrition and support of the body. The cerebral organs consist of the brain and nervous system, and their function is so to co-ordinate and regulate the action of the nutritive organs that they shall all work harmoniously for the good of the whole. Now, corresponding to these organs of nutrition and cerebration in the animal body, are the temporal and spiritual powers in the body politic. The Temporal Power consists of governors, directors and administrators; and its function is to superintend the organization of industry and carry on the work of practical administration. The Spiritual Power consists of the philosophical Priesthood, and its function is to moderate, by its moral pressure, the exercise of the Temporal Power for the benefit of the community at large. And just as Comte finds the organs of nutrition and innervation

distinct and independent, so he would make the Temporal and Spiritual powers distinct and independent. The Spiritual Power is to be concentrated in the hands of the High Priest of Humanity, backed by women and working men (the former of whom represent the sympathetic side of Humanity, and the latter its active side) and will act by the purely moral methods of persuasion and sympathy. The Temporal Power will be concentrated in the hands of Three Bankers (as dealing with the widest relations of industry), supported by a staff of Merchants and Manufacturers, who will be arranged according to the greater or less generality of the functions they perform, and who will act on their own initiative, subject only to the advice of the Spiritual Power, the wealth they administer being held, not as private property, but as a public trust. Such is a broad outline of Comte's scheme of social reorganization, founded on the analogy he finds to exist between Humanity and other organisms—in analogy that might be carried into minute and minuter details. It has analogies, too, with that Catholic Idealism for which Comte had so great an esteem, Humanity taking the place of God, the High Priest of Humanity, of the Pope, and a number of small republics presided over by Three Bankers, the place of the Kingdoms and principalities of the Middle Ages.

Now in this scheme of social reorganization Comte has neglected two great laws of human life, laws which must consign any scheme constructed in disregard of them to the dreamland of utopia. The laws are—

1st That men are alike in their essential natures

2nd That they are led by the Imagination

However different men may be in their special gifts and capacities, there can be no doubt that they are alike in their essential natures. Compared with that deep likeness that is common to them all, any mere superficial difference in kind or degree of faculty is as insignificant as is the difference among the billows when compared with the deep unity of the great

underlying sea. No one denies that men are alike in their physical conformations—in their lungs, heart, stomach, bones, muscles and tissues. Why should not their minds be alike also—their impulses, feelings, tendencies, and passions? Is there any faculty wanting in the average man? Is there any trade, art, or profession which he cannot learn? Will education and training not make of him a better or worse tailor, shoemaker, lawyer, doctor, statesman, or scholar? Is there, indeed, any human sentiment that he cannot comprehend? Shakespeare, the most profound and subtle of all writers, is universally intelligible; so also would be the metaphysicians and philosophers, were it not for their use of a technical and forbidding nomenclature. If, then, the differences among men are poor and insignificant compared with their common likeness, to regard Humanity as an organism in the strict sense of that term, and on that basis to construct a scheme of social reorganization, is equally absurd and chimerical. Of course, as a creature, man has feelings of pride, vanity, love, pity, mercy, which *connect* him with his fellow-man. By reason of this relationship he must act and react on others, must modify and be modified by them. But to suppose that Humanity is an organism merely because the individuals of which it is composed act and react on one another, and so, in a certain sense, form a kind of corporate existence, is about as reasonable as to suppose that the Solar System is an organism because sun, moon, and planets act and react on each other; or that the animal kingdom at large is an organism because, during the long ages of the past, each animal has, in the struggle for existence, modified and been modified by all the rest. If then, we seek for the differences between Humanity as a corporate existence and the higher animal organisms which it is supposed to resemble, we shall find that they are so radical and profound as to destroy any political scheme founded on the assumed likeness. In the first place, the higher vital organisms have a fixed and definite structure, the cells and organs of which they

are composed having a definite relationship to each other and to the whole. But Humanity has no fixed structure, no definite relationship either of individuals or classes, but changes its structure and character from age to age. At one time we have Feudalism, with its popes, kings, nobility, and serfs, at another Theocracy, with the supremacy of priests and hierarchy of castes, and again, Republicanism with its liberty, equality, and rights of man. In the second place, in vital organisms the condition of the organism as a whole is of primary importance, the condition of the parts being of importance only in so far as they affect the whole, whereas in Humanity the condition of the individual is the important point, the condition of society as a whole being but a sequence and after-effect of the state of the individual, any revolution in individual thought and sentiment altering entirely the character of society as a whole. And lastly (and here we see the neglect of the fact of the identical nature), we have a still more fatal and radical difference between Humanity and the higher organisms. In the higher vital organisms the cells and organs are so constructed as to do one special kind of work, and one only, the higher the organism the more specialised and limited being the work of its separate parts. The cells of the liver and brain have each their separate functions which cannot be interchanged, so also have the lung, stomach, and heart. But the individuals of which Humanity is composed are, on the contrary, so constructed as not only to do one kind of work and adapt themselves to one set of circumstances, but to do any kind of work and adapt themselves to any set of circumstances. Each man has, equally with every other man, an inlet into the common sea of knowledge and truth, although the conditions of life usually restrict his energies to some one or more special department of labour. For just as the eye is made to sweep the horizon, although it is directed from moment to moment on the different objects around us, so the mind of man is made to span the arch of heaven and travel through all the constellations.

tions of genius and virtue, although it must bend its energies on the practical problems that present themselves for solution from hour to hour. While each man, then, has a bias or *special* power which is his strong point, and makes one particular kind of work easier to him than another—whether it be mechanics, art, poetry, philosophy, or practical administration—he has also within him a *general* or universal power, which can grasp indifferently each or any of these different branches of knowledge. Any system, therefore, that ignores this deep likeness of nature common to all men, and on the superficial likeness existing between Humanity and other vital organisms would erect a scheme of Practical Politics, is doomed to failure. Any system that, without consulting a man's special bias and genius, would condemn him on the judgment or caprice of others or another to become a mere cog or wheel in the vast machine of society, to be eternally grinding out his own particular product, without right of entry into the open field of universal truth, has already passed into the cloudland of utopia. The Hindoos were taught to believe that certain classes sprang from the head, others from the trunk, and others, again, from the feet of Brahm. By accepting this degrading superstition and, in consequence, denying the native identity of all men, they split themselves up into a hierarchy of castes, the result of which may be seen in the stagnation in which India lies at the present hour, her sweltering millions being as uninteresting to the aspiring mind as a swarm of moving insects—the more, the worse. Would Comte have us repeat this Hindoo superstition, and again erect a social system on the basis of Caste? He does not, I am aware, in theory go to this extreme length, but his system, if put in operation, would end in a caste-despotism. For example, he makes provision in his scheme for a priestly class, for an administrative class, and for a working class. These classes are to take rank according to the greater or less generality of the functions they perform; and in the higher ranks are to recruit themselves by choosing

their own successors. They are also expected to remain satisfied with their respective positions, and to do the work assigned them without aspiration and without choice. Who can doubt that this scheme would become an intolerable despotism before it had well time to set? Comte partially perceived this, and proposed to guard against it by giving all men alike the same education, and thereby satisfying the feeling of common equality. But he apparently did not perceive that if he ranged men in a fixed hierarchy of classes, the higher would despise the lower to the end of time, spite of all education, and so would be brought back all those evils which his system sought to avoid. And furthermore, in spite of the fact that he would have all men equally educated he still thought it necessary to put them in leading strings, and that, too, in an age when the only plea for despotism that still survives and retains any show of plausibility is the fact that men are *not* educated, and, in consequence are not able to manage their own affairs. The truth is Comte believed in Caste, that is to say he laid more stress on the small superficial differences of men than on their great fundamental likeness, and so, instead of allowing each man to know best what was the proper direction for his genius and character would place our whole spiritual and temporal concerns in the hands of a High Priest of Humanity and Three Bankers, who (being phrenologists) would, by some such 'cheap signboard as the shape of the head or colour of the beard, sum up the inventory of our characters and fortunes.' Let us hope, on the contrary, that the time is not far distant when any attempt to prevent a man from having a chance for the full development of his genius and character, as a bird is allowed to build its nest according to its own nature will be regarded as a conspiracy against the dignity of the human mind and treason against the laws of God.

Having pointed out some of the utopias into which Comte falls by his neglect of the great law that men are *alike* in

their essential natures, I come now to the second great neglect in his scheme of positive polity—the neglect of the law that men are led by the Imagination.

In making Humanity as a whole the end of his social system, Comte treats individual men as if they were so many pieces in a Chinese puzzle, and expects, nay believes, that when he has discovered the way in which they are to be arranged so as to form a stable and harmonious structure, they will become like puppets in his hands, and remain in the positions in which he has placed them. It is not surprising that he should believe that individuals are so easily manipulable when we remember that he regards them as mere metaphysical abstractions. We have seen the way in which he constructs his social scheme, with its checks, balances, and compensatory movements; how he separates the spiritual from the temporal power; the former acting by purely *moral* means (supported by the sympathy of women and working-men), the latter by its *material* power and command over the products of industry. Having disposed the different classes of society in this way, Comte believes that the individuals of which they are composed will accept the positions assigned them, and will continue to occupy them from a sense of duty alone, without inclination, aspiration, or choice. The practical difficulties that lie in the way of his scheme, he makes as little of, as Captain Bobadil did of the numbers and force of the enemy to which he was opposed. He has no fear that men will refuse to keep the positions assigned them, as they will be judged entirely by their intellectual and moral qualities, and not by their ‘social position.’ And as he asserts that there will be no desire for fame, power, or applause, but only to do one’s duty, there need be no fear of any conflict of jurisdiction, of any encroachment of one class on another. The Priesthood of Philosophers will not dream of interfering in practical politics, as it would be beneath their dignity, and besides would weaken their speculative faculty by its attention to petty details. Any such unworthy ambition for vulgar power would

be regarded, both by themselves and others, as a sign of moral weakness and mental deficiency. Practical politicians, on the other hand, he believes, will restrict themselves entirely to their duty of keeping order, and would deem it an impertinence to claim any authority over thought. And, in like manner, women will renounce their utopia of what is called 'woman's rights,' and will concern themselves entirely with their household duties, the education of their children, and the giving of their moral support to the spiritual power. The Working-man, too, will be equally reasonable and self-denying, and will be as easily managed as either the women, the politicians, or the priests. He will be content to remain where he is. He will not seek power, indeed he would not have it were it thrust on him. It is only exceptional persons, Comte thinks, who care for power on its own account. Neither will he care for fame—a bubble beneath the concern of sensible men. And when it has to be bought by meditation, as among the philosophers and priests, or is burdened by care, as among the practical statesmen, Comte distinctly declares that the working-man will have nothing to do with it. Is it not enough for the working-man, he asks, that all other classes should be working for his benefit? Why then should he give himself either thought or trouble for so unreal a phantasm? And as to wealth, the working-man will ask himself what connexion it has with true happiness; and finding it has none whatever, but that, on the contrary, true happiness depends far more on the free play of all our powers (in which respect, indeed, the working-man is in a much better position than those above him in the social scale), he will feel it no sacrifice to renounce it entirely. 'The working man,' says Comte, 'will cease to aspire to wealth and power, leaving these to those whose political activity requires that strong stimulus. Each man's ambition will be to do his work well.'

Such is the beautiful utopia which Comte expected to see realised in a generation from the time in which it was promulgated. That generation has already come and gone, and, as we

are apparently as far from its realisation as ever, there must have been some great law of human life neglected in his calculations. That law, as I have already said, is that *men are led by the Imagination*. I am aware, of course, that Comte made the acceptance of his political scheme conditional on the acceptance of his religious and scientific views, and that it was only because he imagined that these views would be accepted as soon as they were promulgated that he anticipated so speedy a realisation of his political scheme. He is constantly declaring that before his practical scheme can be realised, there must be what he calls a spiritual re-organisation, that is to say, a re-organisation of opinion and belief, and not of caucuses, electors, or ballot-boxes. Now, I have already endeavoured to point out the scientific fallacies in his speculative opinions, when regarded from their political side. In future chapters I shall endeavour to point out the spiritual fallacies in these opinions, when regarded from their religious side. For the present, however, we may fairly assume that they will not meet with that immediate acceptance which he imagined. But, even admitting that his speculative theories should prove to be abstractly true, to believe that men will hasten to realise the political scheme founded on them, merely because he has demonstrated that such a scheme would be for the greatest *absolute* good of all concerned, is as utopian as to believe that a reign of universal peace will follow on a demonstration of the benefits of peace by the Peace Society, or, varying the analogy, that a woman will fall in love with a man merely because he can be proved to be the possessor of all the virtues. The truth is, men are not led by what is *absolutely* best for themselves, either in this world or the next, but by recondite and subtle combinations of thought, feeling, and fancy which have fascinated their *imaginations* and are *proportioned* to their stages of culture. Proportioned to their stages of culture—for, while a cruder conception would disgust by its coarseness, a more refined one would repel by its comparative coldness and tenuity. There

could not have been, perhaps, two men more antagonistic in nature and attribute than Shelley and Tom Sayers, and yet, if the world were canvassed as to which was the better man, it is a question whether the prize-fighter would not poll as many votes as the ideal poet. The Christian Heaven is a much more refined conception than that of the Mohammedan or Norseman, and yet, I doubt not, the Mohammedan, with his Heaven despoiled of its bright eyed houris, and the Norseman with his Valhalla stripped of its bloody trophies, would feel as if their principal incentives to virtue had been withdrawn. In the same way, the Religion of Humanity is a much more abstract belief than Christianity, and the rewards it holds out to virtue are of a much more thin and transcendental character. If Christianity, therefore, with a creed which was believed in, and which was supported by rewards more tangible and alluring than any which the Religion of Humanity has to offer, could not, in its nineteen centuries of organised effort, subdue the spirit of the world, and the fascinations of power, wealth, and fame, much less will the religion of Auguste Comte. The truth is, power, wealth, and fame are the most potent influences in human life, and are so proportioned to our present stage of civilization and culture as to fascinate the imaginations of the great masses of men more than aught else beside. Any political scheme therefore, that ignores them, or disposes of them as by a wave of the hand, has already passed into that land of dreams to which Plato's Republic and More's Utopia have long since been relegated. And although it was a fine illustration of Comte's innocence and simplicity to have imagined that philosophers would have no practical schemes, and practical politicians no political theories, that women would efface themselves, that working-men would renounce fame, wealth, and power, and that all classes would live only to do their duty in the positions in which they were placed, it nevertheless exhibited more faith in the power of an abstract system of thought than either History or the nature of things will

CHAPTER IV.

THE POLITICS OF CARLYLE.

IF we turn now to Carlyle we shall find that he, too, proposes as his end the welfare of society *as a whole*, and not the welfare of the *individual*, and consequently tightens the bonds of what he calls Duty, and represses Expansion and Liberty. I am aware that Carlyle has been accused of making the Individual, and not Humanity the central point of his political system; nevertheless I venture to assert that although a cursory glance may lend colour to this view, a deep insight into his philosophy as a whole will not bear it out. In his *Sartor Resartus*, for example, we find that he figures society as a living organism, of which Government is the protecting skin, Industry the working muscle, and Religion the nervous tissue and life-giving heart. The generations of mankind, too, he makes correspond with the days of the individual; birth and death with the morning and evening bells that call him to labour and to rest. And just as in the individual, growth, development, and decay go on together, so do they in society, which also has its periods of weakness and vigor, of youth, manhood, decrepitude, and new birth. Elsewhere he says that Society is the vital articulation of many individuals into a new collective individual—a second all-embracing life in which our individual lives have room to expand and develope. Hence, ‘to figure Society as endowed with life, is scarcely a metaphor, but is rather the statement of a fact by such methods as language affords.’

If Carlyle, then, regards Society as an organism, we may know beforehand that his main concern will be to keep each individual strictly in subordination to the interests of the whole. And, accordingly, we find that his whole gospel is

that each man shall occupy the position and do the duty assigned him and in so doing find his highest welfare. There is nothing, perhaps, which he deprecates more than the tendency in modern peoples to rupture the bonds that formerly kept man dependent on man, and thereby make room for more and more individual liberty and expansion. He sees with a shudder the successive cords cut one by one—the freeing of the slave; the making contracts between master and servant, employer and workman, temporary instead of permanent, the abolition of all political and commercial restriction,—until, with ‘laissez-faire’ and ‘supply and demand’ as our ultimate political evangel, he exclaims in despair, ‘Cash payment is now the sole nexus between man and man. So deep, indeed, is his concern for union among men, that if he cannot have it spontaneous and natural, he will have it mechanical and fictitious, if he cannot have society united by love, he will have it welded together by a despotism of force.’ 4

So far, then, Comte and Carlyle agree in regarding Humanity as an organism, and consequently in drawing the bonds of order so tightly as to repress expansion and liberty. But they differ in the attributes with which they invest Humanity. For while Comte elevates it into a Supreme Being, and makes it the object not only of his political schemes, but also of his religion, Carlyle makes it the object of his political schemes only, and centres his religion in God. The result is that, while with Comte there is no wall separating religion from politics, but, on the contrary, his political views can be deduced *directly* from his religious ones, with Carlyle there is a vast chasm between them, which can only be bridged over *indirectly*—the chasm that separates cause from effect, the known from the unknown, the finite from the infinite. Now the way in which he bridges over this chasm is worthy of attention. He believes that the idea of God is of no use whatever for practical direction in this world, but is of service only as a great background of trust and inspiration. It is too

vague, shadowy, and immense, to be realised by human thought or spoken of in human words. For practical direction, therefore, it is necessary that the idea should be embodied in tangible and sensuous symbols and representations; and of these symbols the best, according to Carlyle, is the Hero, or Great Man. All the great religions of the world have exemplified this, for they have all had, on the one hand, a Supreme Being, and on the other, some individual who was His symbol and interpreter on earth, such as Moses, Jesus, and Mahomet. Accordingly, while Carlyle makes God the real soul and centre of human life, he makes the Great Man the centre of practical affairs, and regards him, and his fellows who have gone before, as the keystones of the successive arches of that bridge of Time which stretches between the two Eternities.

But although both Comte and Carlyle thus agree in giving great men the supreme direction of affairs, and in placing the lives and fortunes of other men at their disposal, they nevertheless differ in their motive for so doing. Comte, believing that the knowledge of physical, moral, and intellectual laws is the only solid basis for human progress, would reverence the Great Man only in so far as he discovers and announces these laws, and applies them to human affairs. Carlyle, on the other hand, believing that we are led by Imagination, and that the imaginations of men are more roused and fascinated by a concrete human personality, than by any mere catalogue of abstract laws however true, would reverence the Great Man on his own account. They differ also in the way in which they would distribute the supreme power. Comte, believing that action and speculation are rarely combined in an equal degree in the same person; that the philosopher who discovers the great laws of the world has quite a different order of mind from the practical man who applies them; would divide the supreme power into the temporal and spiritual, placing the former, as we have seen, in the hands of Three Bankers, and the latter in the hands of the High Priest of Humanity. Carlyle, on the other hand,

believing that the direction and administration of affairs is only a form of general insight; that the man who can discover, could, if he chose, equally well apply; that the prophet, priest, or philosopher would make a warrior, statesman, or king; believing further that the moral and intellectual faculties are but two sides of the same thing; that the man of good insight must also have had patience, candour, openness of mind and perseverance, all of which are characteristic of men of action: would unite the temporal and spiritual powers in the hands of one person—the Hero, or supremely Great Man of the age.

The Great Man, then, as supreme director of affairs, receiving loyalty and obedience in return for guidance and protection, is Carlyle's solution of the problem of society, as, indeed, it is the form which he believes society will eventually assume when the present transitional and diseased stage of 'liberty and equality' shall have passed away. We shall readily perceive the grounds of this confidence if we consider what his conception is of a truly healthy society. It is a society where men are all actuated by one aim, and that, too, an aim outside of themselves and their own self-interests; and not, like the present, where there are as many aims as there are political doctors or quacks, and where the motto is 'each for himself and the Devil take the hindmost.' It is a society where men are united in bonds of mutual love and helpfulness, and not one where they are merely aggregated together, and where there is no bond uniting them except that of 'cash payment' and 'supply and demand.' It is a society where each man's duty is to keep himself strictly in subordination to the interests of the whole; and not one where each man's right is to follow the leadings of his own inclination or genius. It is a society where men are loyal to those above them, and helpful to those beneath them; and not one where all are alike equal and independent, and, 'where a suspicion of servility even the dogleech hastens to disavow.'—In short, it is a society characterised by unity of aim, loyalty to superiors, care for inferiors, and love and

sympathy towards all. Now the reasons why Carlyle believes that the Hero, as keystone of the social arch, will secure this healthy condition of society, are these: In the first place he believes that society is and always has been kept together by a species of hero-worship; that not a club, *coterie*, or association of men but has its big-little man, who is admired, imitated, and followed, not only in external style and demeanour, but also in tone of mind and habits of thought; and that society, as a whole, is composed of these groups, in each of which the leader is centre and nucleus. He believes, further, that the condition of society, at any given time, depends on whether the ideals which men imitate and admire are true or false, genuine or counterfeit; and that the reason why the present state of society is so unhealthy, is because men worship the false instead of the true, the counterfeit instead of the genuine, 'Bobus, the sausage-maker of Houndsditch,' with his vulgarity and money-bags, instead of some mute inglorious Cromwell, Milton, or Burns. But inasmuch as the reason they worship these false ideals is because they *believe* them to be genuine, he thinks that if the truly Great Man could only be found—one with equal intellect, justice, and magnanimity—the world would at once throw away its counterfeits, fall at the feet of its lawful sovereign, and attain the highest feeling of which a man is capable—reverence for the truly Great and Good. And by way of assisting us in our search he gives us a few specimens as exemplars—Frederick, Cromwell, Johnson, Mirabeau. Presuming, then, that we have found our hero, and made him king over us, all the requisites for a healthy society, he thinks, will follow naturally. Unity of aim—because being the supreme interpreter of the laws of the world and of society, as well as the supreme administrator of affairs, the Hero indicates the goal toward which society should steer, and concentrates all its force to that end; loyalty—because all men must bow down before what is palpably greater and more god-like than themselves; sympathy, union, and helpfulness—because while

diversity of interests, aims and admirations, alienates and divides men, love and devotion to the same person or cause unite them, and bring them into mutual sympathy; and finally, moral freedom—for, while all 'independence is rebellion,' 'only in bowing down before those greater than ourselves can we be truly free.'

Now, this political scheme of Carlyle's is vitiated by its neglect of certain great laws of human life. Of these, the most important are—

1st. That men must have change and rotation in the objects of their admiration and worship.

2nd. That men are essentially alike in nature.

That men must have change in the objects of their admiration, and in consequence must have a succession and rotation of ideals and heroes, is a law of human life which accompanies us from the cradle to the grave. Toys, games, athletics, school and college admirations, maidens, women of different types, books, heroes, are one after another outgrown and cast aside in the onward progress of thought, experience, and culture. Men, I am aware, do not all pass through this long line of ascending ideals in all its stages. Many have their feelings of reverence and admiration so fully satisfied at certain points in their progress, that they care to go no farther. For while a few can find full scope for their admiration and worship in God alone, others are satisfied with the great masters of human thought and effort; and others, again, stop short even at Martin Tupper and the 'Country Parson.' In general it may be said that the distance along the line at which men are arrested and enchained is in direct ratio to their mental power, and marks, on the one hand, their weakness and torpidity of thought, or on the other, its penetration and audacity. Although different men may thus go different lengths before they find satisfaction for their feelings of admiration or worship, nevertheless the law remains, that so long as there is in men life and aspiration, they must have a *change* of ideals and heroes. / Any attempt to

chain the mind to some outgrown and departed love, any attempt to force on us ideals that are foreign to our tastes or culture, would be of all despotisms the most intolerable. Who would attempt, for example, to keep a man's imagination chained to the tops and marbles that delighted his boyhood, or the heroes and writers that fascinated his youth? Even the true heroes, the fixed stars in the firmament, the great warriors, poets, statesmen, philosophers and divines, gradually lose the excessive importance with which we once invested them, and unless we abort early or fossilise before our time, we outgrow their authority and influence, it not their genius, until at last even their most shining achievements, when pressed exclusively on our admiration, become stale and wearisome. In the progress of life new loves, new ambitions, new designs, interest and delight us in turn, and accordingly we require new men, new heroes, new ideals. Time itself, if it does not alter our ideals, changes us who look at them, and as we change, they assume different aspects and lustres. 'No man can bathe twice in the same river,' nor can two generations of men quite regard the same person alike. No hero can be so firmly rooted in our hearts, but in this onward flux of all things he is sure to drift away from us, or we from him. Hence to elevate a hero for our admiration and worship, and to expect that from the ever-shifting standpoints from which in this stream of Time we must regard him, he will always remain our model and beau-ideal, is absurd. Nor is this all. Even were our hero-worships fixed and unalterable, we should have still to confront the fact that they are determined by such subtle, recondite, and personal considerations, that it would be as impossible to get all men to worship the same hero, as to get all women to worship the same man. Men's ideals are as various as their tastes, feelings, and culture; and consequently no genius, however transcendent, no character and personality however commanding, will be everyone's model and exemplar, will fall into the focus of everyone's admiration. Carlyle imagined that it was only

necessary to find the true hero, and men would all recognise him to be their lawful master and bend before him; and to find him he would ransack all classes of society indifferently. But the fact is, men are not led by *intrinsic* virtues at all, but only by such virtues as fascinate *the imagination*, by reason of the halo with which circumstances, such as fame, position, power, wealth, have surrounded them. Who, for example, would make a hero and exemplar of a working-man in an aristocratic country, however intrinsically great he might be? Who would make a hero of a literary recluse in a warlike age, or of a poor man in an age of industry? Carlyle himself confesses that Bobus, with his vulgar money-bags, must of necessity choose some Bobissimus as his hero. But he erred in imagining that the world could be made to embrace true ideals by descanting on their beauties, and in not perceiving that the ideals of the great masses of men are determined by general social and national conditions, and that these conditions must be changed before higher ideals can arise.

But even supposing that men should agree in their choice of a hero, and should remain faithful to him, there is nevertheless in the heroes themselves a large element of illusion. The more nearly they are seen, the more apparent becomes their identity with, and likeness to, ordinary mortals. It is this that has given reason and currency to the old saying that 'no man is a hero to his *valet-de-chambre*.' The fact is, men are great in their own speciality, in some one or more phases of intellect or character, but none are full-orbed; and there are, perhaps, thousands of obscure men who excel the greatest man in all points except his best. It is my turn at the top to-day, yours to-morrow, according to the kind of ability required, and the character of the work to be done. Who, then, amid the infinite variety of great men, is to be the supremely Great Man before whom all the rest are to bend? Is it to be the statesman, the poet, the priest, the philosopher, or the man of the world and affairs? Is there a natural hierarchy among great

men ; and if so, which is the highest and best ? If not, what is to be our principle of selection ?

The above is a brief general outline of the political and social schemes of Comte and Carlyle. Now, as Comte and Carlyle are the most eminent exponents of the doctrine that Humanity, *as a whole*, is the end of political action, the utopias into which they have fallen are not only the best refutations of the truth of their doctrine, but indirectly lend support to the view here maintained, viz., that the elevation and expansion of the *individual* is the end of Government, as it is of Nature. I am aware it may be said that if all schemes that make Humanity as a whole their primary concern, must end in despotism ; all schemes that aim at the elevation and expansion of the Individual, must end in anarchy. But a little consideration will show that this is not necessarily the case. Everyone admits that order and duty, on the one hand, and liberty and expansion on the other, are equally necessary for steady progress, as indeed they are the two poles on which a healthy political activity revolves. But there is this immense difference between them, that while liberty and expansion are *ends* in themselves, order and duty are only *means*. The result is, that if we preach order and duty we do not compass our end, viz., liberty and expansion, but, on the contrary, as we have seen, we strangle liberty and run into despotism ; whereas, if we preach liberty and expansion, we run in a line with the ends to which Nature is working, and can rely on her sublime compensations to give us all the order and stability we require. A number of persons, for example, find themselves on an uninhabited island, where they determine to settle and make for themselves and families a home. Under such circumstances would there be any necessity of preaching the *duty* of patriotism ? Would it not arise spontaneously out of the situation, and be felt by all to be a binding law on every member of the community ? In like manner, if having settled, they should proceed to enter into business relations among themselves, what necessity would

there be of preaching commercial *honor* and *integrity* and the duty of not stealing? Would not a code of commercial honor spring up spontaneously, and be strong in proportion as positive enactments on the subject were weak? So, too, if we give men *common aims, interests, and education*, what necessity will there be of preaching helpfulness and sympathy? We need have no fear, then, of insisting on the elevation and expansion of the individual as the end of political action, but can rely on the necessities of time, place, and circumstance giving us all the order and stability we require.

PART III.—THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY.

CHAPTER I.

THE LAW OF WILLS AND CAUSES.

BEFORE attempting to estimate the effects of Religion in general on what we have seen to be the end not only of Civilization and Government, but also of Nature, viz., the elevation and expansion of the individual mind, it is necessary to pause for a moment and consider the new phase into which Religion has entered in these later times, the new form it has assumed, and the new definition and extension which, in consequence, have been given to the term; as by so doing we shall be in a better position to estimate the probabilities of this new form superseding the older forms, and becoming itself the true and final form. With this object, I have selected for examination the 'Religion of Humanity' of Auguste Comte. Not that I imagine that this religion is held only by Comte and his avowed followers; on the contrary, I am aware that multitudes are travelling towards the same goal, though under quite different colours. For when once the material Universe has been stripped of a ruling Mind, as soul and reason of its existence; when once its cause is regarded as unknowable, and therefore practically questionable or even deniable; it is evident that, unless the religious sentiment is to die out altogether, an object must be found for it in the natural world. And what so likely as that Humanity should be that object? And, sure enough, we find that many of the leading Agnostics and Materialists of the day, although far from avowing that

Humanity is the object of their religion, or raising it into a definite 'cult,' nevertheless find their highest consolation and reward in working for its good, in each and all of its several aspects, physical, intellectual and moral. And what is this but practically making Humanity the object of their religion, in the sense, at least, in which the term is used by Comte himself. Nor is it the Materialists only who make Humanity the object of their religion. Many of those who have discredited Revelation, and who feel that the existence of God is, at best, a hypothesis, incapable of verification, are travelling towards the same religious goal. The author of *Lecc Homo*, for example, who represents the tendency of many of the best minds both outside and inside the Church, distinctly declares that when once we shall have made up our minds to put Nature in the place of God, and Humanity in the place of Christ, Religion will again exercise the same influence over men's minds as it did of old. It is not, therefore, because I believe that the followers of Comte are the only persons who make Humanity the object of their religion, that I have selected the works of that eminent philosopher for examination, but because he has given the conception its most complete and systematic statement, and has indicated with the greatest definiteness, the goal towards which so many are consciously or unconsciously tending.

In a former chapter I pointed out the great laws of human life which Comte had neglected in making Humanity the central point of Politics. I shall now endeavour to point out the great laws he has neglected in making it the central point and object of Religion. But before doing so it is desirable that the reader should have a clear idea of how the 'Religion of Humanity' arose in the mind of Auguste Comte, and of the train of thought which, with him, gave it clearness, coherence, and cogency.

In considering the reasons that induced Comte to make Humanity the central point of his political scheme, I pointed out that from the time that the Human Race as a whole could

be shown to have passed, like other organisms, through a regular course and order of development—successive stages of infancy, youth, and maturity, known as the Theological, Metaphysical, and Positive stages of thought—Humanity could no longer be regarded as a mere *aggregate* of individuals, in the same sense in which a forest is regarded as a mere aggregate of trees, but must be regarded as a distinct *organism* in the true sense of that term; the individuals, like the separate cells of an organism, being mere metaphysical abstractions, with no independent life or completeness in themselves. And, accordingly, notwithstanding the fallacies which we found underlying this conception, we saw that it was both natural and logical that Comte should make Humanity, and not the Individual, the central point of his political system. But we were not prepared to find that he had also made it the central point and object of Religion. For forty centuries the object of Religion had been either a Being or beings lying behind the visible world—invisible Wills that were the secret movers of events, and were called the gods. That anyone, therefore, should venture to bring down this object from Heaven to earth, from the Creator to creatures of a day, was, indeed, a new departure, calculated to shock our most cherished notions. Nevertheless, in spite of our astonishment, a real coherence and consistency will be found in the chain of thought by which he arrives at the conception of Humanity as the object of Religion; and to this I now invite the reader's attention.

To begin with, it is evident that Humanity cannot be placed on a secure basis as the object of Religion, until the belief in the Deity has been completely done away with, as otherwise the mere fact of His existence, whether He interfered in human affairs or not, would be sufficient of itself to compel men's worship, in the face of all less consecrated authorities. Even the mere suspicion of His existence would split the allegiance of the mind in twain, by the rival authority which would set up its claims in the imaginations of men. To get rid of the

Deity, therefore, was Comte's first concern, and in this attempt he was favoured by the temper of the age in which he was born. At the time of his appearance, Science had already carried her torch into every corner of Nature, and so far as her light had penetrated, phenomena were seen to follow an inviolable order, and not to be subject to that caprice which would have characterized them had they been under the dominion of wills like our own—visible or invisible. The consequence was, that a conviction was engendered in the best minds, that if any phenomenon or event were inexplicable, it was not because it did not follow a law, or have its causes in natural antecedents, but merely that, for the time being, its cause or law had not been discovered. As this conviction of the universality of Law grew, Revelation, which attributed events to those disturbances of law known as miraculous or supernatural interpositions, necessarily lost its hold over the best minds, until at last it became almost entirely discredited. With the fall of Revelation, fell the belief in the Deity that rested on it, or, at any rate, from that time forwards the belief in Him must stand or fall by the same kind of evidence as produces belief in other domains of thought, and must be reached through the same media by which all other knowledge is attained, viz., through the natural human faculties. But it is generally believed that all knowledge or belief that comes through the natural human faculties must fall within the general domain of Science. If, then, the existence of the Deity should prove to be beyond the reach of Science, what reason would there be for believing in His existence at all? Now, with Science, it is an axiom that every circumstance and event has its cause in antecedent circumstances and surrounding conditions. All, therefore, that Science can deal with or take cognizance of, are the *laws* which events obey, not their efficient or final *causes*. It can discover, for example, that bodies fall to the ground after a certain law, the law of gravitation—but what the cause of gravitation may be, it does not profess to know. It can dis-

cover that men's actions are the results of certain motives, and that these motives spring from a combination of passions and desires, but what the *raison d'être* of these passions or desires may be, or why, indeed, they should exist at all, it admits to be quite beyond its reach. It can trace the connexion of the links in that chain of circumstance and event which constitute the phenomena of the world as they unfold themselves in Time, but confesses itself quite incapable of discovering the existence of any Great Cause underlying the whole procession of events in past, present, and future, and giving them their aim, reason, and animating principle. The consequence is, that it as completely ignores the existence of the Deity as it would the existence of a star which was admitted to be beyond the reach of the telescope, and which hung only on the credibility of some old tradition of the childhood of the race. But merely to show that there is no reason for believing in the existence of the Deity is not enough. Before we can logically discard Him altogether, we must also find some natural reason for his having been believed in at all; just as we entirely discard the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism, not when we have proved that they are, *à priori*, incredible, but only when we have shown how they can be produced by merely natural human agencies. Now this is precisely what Comte professes to have done. He shows that the belief in the existence of supernatural beings or gods was not a chance thing, a casual, capricious, or accidental thing, but was the necessary and inevitable result of a great law of the human mind, the law, viz., that when the *laws* of Nature are unknown, men refer events to the agency of *wills* like their own. How true this law is may be seen on all hands. Children, for example, who most clearly exhibit the native tendencies of the human mind when uninstructed by positive knowledge, habitually refer events to the agency of wills like their own, and ascribe personality to the fire that burns them, the wind that blows on them, to the sun and moon, the clouds and rain, and all the natural forces. As we grow up to

maturity, and learn more and more of the natural causes of events, we have no necessity for so many invisible agencies, and consequently ascribe personality only to those events that are still dark, capricious, or uncertain. For example, the natural laws that regulate the tides or the changes of the moon, are so well known that we can predict these phenomena as easily as the return of morning or of night, but not so the laws that regulate the changes in the weather. The consequence is, that while no one now dreams of praying for any change in the moon or tides, there are many of weak scientific faith who still continue to pray for rain or sunshine. The reason lies in that law of the human mind above enunciated, whereby we ascribe what seems uncertain and capricious, not to steadfast and immutable laws, but to capricious wills—wills which like our own, can be invoked and altered by prayer. When thunder was believed to be the voice of Jupiter and the lightning his bolt that deity was duly invoked in magnificent temples to stay his avenging hand, or turn it against the enemy. But from the time that these or the like phenomena were found to be due to natural causes, the worship of the deity has ceased, he himself has become a myth, and his temples have fallen into ruin and disappeared. At one time the appearance of an eclipse, or of a comet in the sky, was looked upon with awe, as a portent, a visible sign of the displeasure of some deity, who was to be appeased by the same methods as would be taken to appease an enraged human being. But when the nature or causes of these appearances became known, men ceased to refer them to the operation of invisible wills, and regarded them with as little concern as they did the sun or moon. And yet, even now, those old-fashioned people who have never heard of a scientific law, still regard them with the same superstitious awe as, when boys, we regarded any strange or unaccountable noises we heard in the night, noises which in our fears we ascribed to invisible wills peopling the darkness—ghosts, spirits, and the like.

So true and pregnant is the law we have just illustrated—the law, viz., that when natural causes are unknown, events are attributed to the agency of wills like our own—that we might have known, *à priori*, that the religions of the world must go through the successive stages of Animism or Fetichism, Polytheism, and Monotheism. I mean, of course, only in the most general way, for the specialities of form which the different religions have assumed in the different ages and countries, are the results of the union of this law with local circumstances and conditions which have long passed away unknown, and therefore could not have been predicted. In the earliest stages of human progress, as in the earliest years of the individual, the laws which phenomena obeyed being little known, the nature and movements of objects were ascribed to the agency of special wills dwelling in the objects themselves. These wills were regarded as the real causes of the phenomena observed, and so we had Fetichism. As the knowledge of natural causes extended, and observation and experience detected uniformity and law in what had hitherto been apparently capricious and uncertain, many objects were found to act alike in groups. The god then presided over the group and not over the individual, and so we had Polytheism. But as the god could not dwell in all the members of the group at once, he was relegated to a distance, and a metaphysical substitute or representative of himself was installed in the object; this metaphysical abstraction being known as the *nature* of the object, its *essence*, *vital principle*, and the like. With the further advance of natural knowledge, the jurisdictions of the different deities (invaded by natural law on every side) so overlapped one another, that it was felt to be impossible that so many different wills should harmonize. They were all, in consequence, reduced under the dominion of one, and so we had Monotheism. Carrying the law a step further, Comte contended that, when the last capriciousness of Nature shall have been removed, when all phenomena shall be seen to

fall under the dominion of *natural* laws, so as to be anticipated with greater and greater precision, then the jurisdiction of the gods will become less and less, until, with no need for their help, and no evidence for their existence, they will fade away into nonentity, and be dropped at last from the memory and language of men. In this way Comte, by showing that the belief in the gods or God is the *necessary* result of a law of the human mind operating on the imagination in the earlier stages of culture completely gets rid of the Deity as the object of Religion.

Having thus given the Deity his quietus, Comte finds the *religious sentiment* still alive and confronting him, and has to determine whether it is a mere passing phase of human nature, which (now that it has lost its object) must soon pass away, or whether it is a permanent sentiment in man, but one which has hitherto mistaken its true object. He decides that it is a permanent sentiment, but one that has hitherto mistaken its true object, and in this he sees nothing unusual or exceptional. The sentiments have always been regarded as mere blind impulses which had to be enlightened by the intellect as to their true objects. Love, for example, although a permanent sentiment in the breast of man, changes its object with years and experience, and the person we loved yesterday, becomes, under the more critical judgment of to-day, indifferent to us. What was once beautiful to us is now repulsive, and what we once believed to be excellent, is now tawdry and offensive. Courage, too, which some centuries ago, showed itself in personal prowess now finds its highest glory in championing forlorn cause, and in braving, for high ideals, public or private censure. Avarice, which at first has for its object the pleasure which money brings, ends by having for its object the money itself. And so, too, with our feelings of hope and fear, which change their objects with the changing and vanishing year. The *c*, and the like instances show that there is no inherent absurdity in supposing that, if once the

intellect has shown that the existence of the Deity is an illusion, the object of the religious sentiment may be found elsewhere. The question then becomes, with Comte, what is its true object, and where is it to be found? Is it the Laws of Nature? It cannot be the Laws of Nature, for we have seen that so soon as the laws of any object are discovered, that object ceases to be worshipped; the worship being transferred to those objects whose movements are still capricious and uncertain, that is, to those supposed to be the seat of indwelling wills. Astrolatry, for example, had long passed away, and the stars had long ceased to have any interest for human beings, when men still continued to worship and propitiate comets and eclipses as being the visible manifestations of the Divine Will. The Laws of Nature, therefore, are not the *natural* objects of Religion. Besides, the Laws of Nature, although we must bend to them or be broken by them, can of themselves neither be loved, worshipped, nor revered. They are *lower* than the mind of man, and therefore cannot be revered; they are hard and inflexible, and therefore cannot be propitiated; they are impersonal, and therefore cannot call forth *human* sentiment. It is true that if they were regarded as *instruments* of a Divine Will, they might be worshipped as such, but Comte, having killed the Deity, and left Nature to herself as a huge hulk and corpse, the Laws of Nature cannot be to him the object of Religion. What, then, is the true object? If we consider the nature of the religious sentiment itself, we shall get a hint as to the direction in which we are to look. We shall find that the group of feelings which make up the religious sentiment in man, viz., love, admiration, reverence, are not a group exclusively set apart for the Deity, but are precisely the same feelings that have their appropriate objects among our fellow-men. When the apostle, for example, asked, how can ye love God whom ye have not seen, if ye love not your brother whom ye have seen, he implied that the feeling of love that goes out to God as part of the religious sentiment, is the same feeling that goes out

towards our fellow-man. When Carlyle said that the real religion that was in a man was his practical Hero-worship, he assumed that the reverence we have for God is the same feeling as the reverence we have for the great men of the world. And thus we see there is no necessity of going to the invisible world to find the object of a sentiment which has already its appropriate object in this world. If we take a glance at the religions of the world historically, we shall find there, too, that what was really worshipped in the old religions was not so much the invisible Deity as such, as the *human* qualities with which he was supposed to be endowed. It was the human qualities of *Jehovah*—his wisdom, goodness, and fatherly care, his power, jealousy, and revenge—that were loved and feared, rather than the mere fact of his invisible and supernatural existence. It was the beautiful *human* character of Christ rather than the mere abstract fact of his being the Son of God, that called forth human love. The true object of Religion, therefore, when found, must be something that can be endowed with human qualities, and not a mere abstraction.

If, then, the object of Religion must be something real and tangible, and not imaginary and invisible; something with human attributes, and not, like the laws of Nature, the persistence of Force, the Unknowable, a mere abstraction, it must either be some one or more individual men or the Human Race in general. Carlyle, as we have seen, elevated Great Men into objects of human worship, not on their own account *so much*, as because they were the best *symbols* and representatives on earth of that Divine Mind which alone can completely satisfy the infinite aspirations of man's soul, and which alone can meet those infinite possibilities which in imagination we can realise, but which in this life we have not found and shall not find. But Comte, on the contrary, believing in no Divine Mind or which Great Men can be the symbols or representatives, could not erect individual men into objects of worship. He saw that no man has the necessary universality and completeness of

nature, nor yet the necessary duration, to become the object of a universal religion. The human race soon outgrows the greatest individuals, and, after using them as ladders, leaves them behind in its ascending progress. The greatest man is, after all, only a beautiful fragment or torso, not complete; and, as Emerson says, is like a piece of Labrador spar, which shows beautiful colours only when held at a particular angle. It would take all the fragments in their beautiful diversity—the poets, artists, musicians, statesmen, and philosophers—to give us anything like the universality of excellence which we require. Besides, as we have seen, Comte regards individual men as he would the separate cells of the human body, viz., as abstractions, with no independent life in themselves; and would deem it as absurd to make them the objects of a universal religion, as he would to make one cell in the body the object of worship to another, instead of the great organism itself, of which they are all parts, and to whose welfare they all minister and are subordinate. If, then, Great Men, are not the true objects of Religion, there is left only as alternative that great Humanity of which they form a part, ‘in whom we live, move, and have our being,’ and in the stream of whose swelling tide Great Men are cast up as larger or smaller bubbles merely. This, according to Comte, is our real Supreme Being, and gives satisfaction alike to our feelings of reverence, attachment, and love. We can reverence Humanity, because it is greater than ourselves, as to it we owe all that is best in ourselves. We are the heirs of all the past ages in the life of that Great Being, and were we stripped to-day of all that we have got from the Past, and left to ourselves, we should have to start afresh as savages. We can assist Humanity, because it is imperfect, and all the good we do, whether by word or deed, directly helps to benefit and perfect it. We can love Humanity and sympathize with it, because, unlike the lower world, it is of the same nature as ourselves. In short, we can worship it, and devote our lives and souls to its service.

Such, in brief, is the train of thought by which Comte makes Humanity the object of Religion. In endeavouring to point out the fallacies that pervade it, I shall follow in his own footsteps, and as his first endeavour is to get rid of the Deity, and then to put Humanity in His place I shall try, in the two following chapters, to show, first, that he cannot get rid of the Deity and, *secondly*, that, even if he could, he could not make Humanity the object of human worship

CHAPTER II.

FIRST PRINCIPLES.

IN the sketch I have given of Comte's doctrine in the last chapter, we have seen that, to get rid of the Deity, he relies on deductions drawn from two great principles. The first principle is that Science, which includes in its domain all knowledge properly so-called, can know nothing of a Deity, as it deals with the Laws of Nature only; and therefore there is no reason for believing in His existence. The second principle is that it is a law of the human mind that, when the *laws* of Nature are unknown, men refer events to the agency of *wills* like their own; and, consequently, that, the belief in the Deity having its origin in this fact, when all phenomena shall be shown to be governed by natural laws, there will be no room for a Deity at all. Now, nothing can better exemplify the weight and importance I attach to these two principles than my conviction that, on a just interpretation of them, the whole question of Theism on the one hand, and of Atheism and Materialism on the other, turns: and, furthermore, that I am willing to stake my own religious beliefs on the issue. In the meantime, while no Materialist or Atheist more fully believes than I do that Science can know nothing of a Supreme Being, nevertheless, instead of becoming a Materialist or Atheist, I remain a Theist; while no Positivist is more fully convinced that it is a law of the human mind that, when natural causes are unknown, men refer phenomena to the agency of wills like their own, nevertheless, instead of regarding the Supreme Being as a mere illusion of the imagination, I affirm and uphold His existence. It will perhaps prove not uninteresting to the reader to follow the chain of thought whereby, from so fundamental

an agreement in principle, so wide a difference in conclusion is reached

To consider, then, Comte's first great point, viz., that because Science can know nothing of a Deity, therefore there can be no reason for believing in His existence. Now, I may as well state at once that the reason I admit the premises of this proposition and dispute the conclusion, is because of the distinction that I see to exist between *knowledge* and *belief*—a distinction, indeed, on which the whole question turns, but which, so far as I am aware, has not hitherto been brought forward with sufficient distinctness, not sufficiently dissected out from among the vague and mingled tissue of intuitions and feelings with which Materialism has been assailed. But, as the argument is more or less involved, I shall be obliged to take a somewhat circuitous route to my end, and shall begin by marking out the limits within which the discussion must range. And first, then, I would observe that in all speculations on the origin of the world and the nature of things the question is not what is the truth *absolutely*, and apart from its relation to ourselves but what is the truth *relatively* to the human mind, with its fixed and definite organization, its special and peculiar intuitions and powers. It is not a question of what would be true for us were we endowed with one or two senses more, one or two senses less, with one or two faculties and intuitions more or less, but of what is true for us with our five senses and the various attributes of *imagination, sentiment, and reason* which we are all known to possess. The question, in a word, is not what might be true for a higher order of being, or for a lower order of being but what is true for the *mortal human mind*. If this must be the case, it is evident that Truth in general, and, in consequence, Belief, can be for us nothing more or less than what will *harmonize* with our mental constitution. Truth, to a monkey, is simply what will harmonize with the mind of a monkey, such as it is although that creature could never be taught to see truths that are to us as clear as day. Truth, to a

higher order of intelligence than man, would simply be what would harmonize with that intelligence; although to it the air might be seen full of spirits which to us are invisible and unknown. If, then, Truth in general, and therefore Belief, can be for a human being nothing more than what will harmonize with his mental constitution, any particular truth will be to him merely what will harmonize with all the other truths held by him. If I am asked to assent to a given proposition, I consider whether it will harmonize with all the other truths of a like nature held by me; if it does, I accept it, if not, I reject it. The reason the madman believes his disordered fancies is because they harmonize with his particular hallucination; the reason we do not believe them is because to do so would be to destroy the harmony of our own minds. When a truer system of belief supersedes a falser one, as the Copernican the Ptolemaic system of astronomy, what happens? Merely that a greater and wider harmony supersedes a lesser and narrower one—a harmony that includes more facts directly, and indirectly accounts for more apparent anomalies. If, then, truth in *general* and in *particular* can be for human beings nothing more than what will *harmonize* with their mental constitution, and their stage of knowledge and culture, it will not be difficult to show that many of the fundamental truths on which our ordinary intelligence, and even sanity, rests, although they must be *believed*, cannot be *known by Science*. An examination of a few of the more pregnant of these beliefs will be sufficient to explode that fond illusion of the Materialists which has so long been regarded by them as an axiom of thought, viz., that what cannot be known by Science, may logically be discarded or ignored. These beliefs may be tabulated as follows:—

1. The belief in the existence of a world *outside* ourselves.
2. The belief in the existence of *mind* in our fellow-man.
3. The belief in the *superiority* of mind to matter, of heroism to self-indulgence, and the like.
4. The belief in the *persistency* of Force.

5 The belief in the *co-existence* of attractive and repulsive forces

6 The belief in scientific causation

Should I succeed in showing that these truths, which we are bound to believe, cannot be known by Science, I shall have done away with Comte's great argument against the belief in the existence of the Deity viz., that He cannot be known by Science

1 *The belief in the existence of a world outside of ourselves*
The table, for example at which I am writing, how do I know that it exists outside of me? If I look at it, touch it, or in any way handle it, all I can know of it is the consciousness of various sensations *within* me, not *outside* of me. Not only its form and colour, but also its hardness and solidity, are sensations existing *within* me, within my own consciousness, the proof being that if my nerves of sight were destroyed, I could not see it; if my nerves of sensation, I could not feel it, if all were destroyed, I could not know of its existence at all. And yet, although all I can *know* scientifically of the table are sensations within me, my mind is so constructed that it must *believe* it to exist outside of me. To believe otherwise, and to act on the belief, were madness, and proof that the balance and harmony of the mind had been overthrown.

2 *The existence of what is called mind in our fellow-man*
How do I know that my friend has such a thing as a mind? I can neither see it, feel it, or in any way expose it, by microscope or scalpel, retort or chemical re-agent. If my *belief* in it depended on what I could *know* of it scientifically, I should not believe in its existence at all, for the crowning boast of scientific knowledge is that all its conclusions are capable of being brought in the last resort to the test of the senses. The existence of mind in our fellow-man, like the existence of a Supreme Being, is a mere hypothesis. It cannot be known by Physical Science, and yet we are bound to *believe* it, as it is one of the fundamental assumptions on which a large part of our intelligence is built.

3. *The belief in the superiority of mind to matter, of heroism to self-Indulgence.* How do we know that mind is *superior* to matter, and that the nobler sentiments of the mind are *higher* in their nature than the sensual and selfish ones? How do we know that heroism, magnanimity, and self-sacrifice are *higher* than self-indulgence, grossness, and sensuality? The cells in the brain, from whose activity these different emotions and attributes spring, are all alike matter, alike indifferent; and, so far as can be *known* by Physical Science, are equal in dignity. And yet we are forced to *believe* that there is a difference in the *rank* of the corresponding emotions, otherwise the great bulk of literature and conversation would be a mockery and a delusion; the great interest of human life—the apportioning the relative degrees of virtue and vice, praise and blame, honor and dishonor—would cease, or become an unreality and absurdity.

4. *The belief in the Persistence of Force, that is to say, in the fact that the quantity of force in the Universe is fixed and definite.* This belief, according to Herbert Spencer, the prince of scientific thinkers, lies at the very root of all science, and is the secret source from which all the laws of Nature are derived. They are all corollaries, says Spencer, from that one great fact. All scientific reasoning *assumes* that force is fixed, for were it not, the scales (which are simply measures of gravitative force), and other instruments by which our scientific conclusions are verified, would vary from day to day, or hour to hour, and so render all scientific knowledge impossible. And therefore the persistence of Force, although it cannot be known, must be believed. Spencer himself admits that, being the basis of Science, it cannot be known by Science. It is a splendid instance of the fact that much that cannot be *known* by Science, must nevertheless be *believed*, otherwise the orderly structure of our intelligence would decompose and fall to pieces.

5. *The belief that matter exists under the form of co-existent forces of attraction and repulsion.* This is an instance of the

fact that what cannot be scientifically *understood* must nevertheless be *believed*. As to the fact itself there can be no doubt. If we take a solid body and try to pull its particles apart it resists our efforts, while if we try to press its particles together, it equally resists, showing that it is made up of particles which both attract and repel each other at the same time. To this fact also is due the phenomenon of action and reaction in physics, and throughout Nature generally. And yet it passes the scientific understanding to realise how one force can attract another while resisting it. Spencer himself says—‘We cannot truly represent one ultimate unit of matter as drawing another while resisting it. Nevertheless, the *belief* is one we are compelled to entertain.’

6 *The belief in Scientific Causation*. The belief that every effect must have a cause which is its equal in amount is another instance of a truth that must be *believed* although it cannot be scientifically *known*. There is nothing in the mere succession of phenomena to necessitate our belief that they are connected by the relation of cause and effect. As far as we can see or know, there is nothing but a series of antecedents and consequents. And yet we are bound to believe in the invisible link of causation uniting things, otherwise the harmony of the mind would be destroyed. The reason the fact of scientific causation cannot be known by Science is, because it is in reality a corollary of the persistence of Force, and as the persistence of Force (as we have just seen), cannot be known by Science, neither can the fact of causation. When we say that a particular effect *must* have a cause, we merely mean that the force of which it consists *must* have been taken from somewhere else—that is to say, must have its cause elsewhere. An effect occurs, for example, which we will represent by the number four. We believe that two and two, or three and one must have preceded it, and we search until we find them, and then we say we have found the cause. To believe that four could have come into existence without two and two or other equivalent, preceding

it, would be to believe that force could come into existence of itself, which would be to deny the persistence of Force.

/ The above instances of the truth, that much that cannot be *known* by Science must nevertheless be *believed*, are among the foundation-stones on which the whole of our intelligence is built. To deny the truth of them would be to break up that little islet of harmony known as the Human Reason, and to decompose and shatter our organized intelligence to its base. To believe that there were no world outside of ourselves; that our fellow-men were automata without minds; that matter was equal or superior to mind, and that the base and degrading things of the world were as high as the noble and self-sacrificing ones; that force was shifting and unsteady, so that we could not be sure that a pound to-day would weigh a pound to-morrow; that events could be sprung on us without a cause; to believe all this, and to act on it, would indeed be to bring chaos into the world and madness into the mind.

If then, the main foundation stones on which our organized intelligence is built must be *believed*, although they cannot be *known* by Science, Comte's first great argument against the existence of the Deity, viz., that He cannot be known by Science, falls to the ground.

His second argument is that it is a law of the human mind that when natural causes are unknown, phenomena are ascribed to the agency of wills like our own, visible or invisible; and consequently that when all phenomena shall be referable to natural causes, there will be no room for a Deity, and no reason for believing in His existence. I shall now endeavour to show that the law used in this way by Comte to get rid of the Deity, when rightly interpreted, leads to the belief in His existence.

I remember well, when reading Comte's works for the first time some years ago, how much I was struck with the subtlety and profundity of many of his leading doctrines, and, among others, with his splendid generalization of the phases through

which the Sciences, but more especially Religion, had passed in their onward course and development. But, notwithstanding my admiration, I felt some dissatisfaction that he should, as I then thought, have drawn his great generalization from the immense array of historical incidents detailed in his general survey rather than from some deep central law or laws of human life believing, as I did, that, without some such laws of human nature as backbone, History might be made to support almost any hypothesis, however superficial, fantastic or absurd. On a second perusal however, I found, to my delight and surprise, that he had really drawn his theory of religious development not so much from a survey of the historical facts as, more or less unconsciously, from a law of the human mind—the law viz., that, when their natural causes are unknown, events are ascribed to wills like our own—and that it was his belief in the truth of this law that gave him his confidence in the theory. As the truth of the law dawned on my own mind, I felt that it was the most profound and far reaching principle that in my various philosophical reading I had come across for many a year, and that when well pondered by men, its effects on their religious beliefs would be simply immense. I saw that it accounted in the most simple and natural way for the successive phases of religious belief—much more satisfactorily indeed than Mr. Spencer's ghost theory, which, although it harmonises with Comte's law, is really only a special corollary from it, and therefore not so central and commanding. I saw that it explained the early Animisms and Fetichisms, their passage into Polytheism, and finally into Monotheism, and moreover, that it accounted for the fact occasionally observed, that as the generalizations of Science widened their areas so as to embrace more and more phenomena that had previously been unaccountable, men's prayers correspondingly contracted, until at the present time they are restricted to such uncertain and capricious phenomena as the weather, health, and the fortunes of war. And when at church I heard the prayers of clergymen

for rain, and in the newspapers read the prayers of archbishops for bountiful harvests and success in arms, I said to myself, There it is again, where *causes* are unknown, *wills* take their place. And, indeed, it was with a certain sense of the ludicrous that I remembered that whenever a new law of Nature had been discovered, and phenomena that had hitherto been fitful and capricious could be predicted with certainty, men dropped their prayers for that particular class of phenomena as quietly and stealthily as thieves, when suspected, drop the goods they have stolen; and I felt that nothing much would be risked in prophesying that when once the laws of the weather were well enough known to enable us to predict it with a certainty which not the most superstitious of archbishops or old women could deny, there would be no more praying for rain. In short, I felt assured that when once this simple law of Comte's were grasped in all its fulness and significance, a bombshell would have fallen into the camps of Theologians and 'Revivalists' of which they little dreamed, and such a collapse of old fictions, such a strangling of old creeds and dogmas would ensue as has been unknown since the breaking up of Paganism. For months the law burnt in me like a lamp, and I could not rest until I had dragged from the recesses of my mind all my most cherished convictions, to see how they would square with the new principle. For a time I feared that its logical implications would shake my own faith to its base, and accordingly prepared myself with the best grace I could, to renounce all I had previously thought or written. But, just so surely as the law appeared to lead to that unbelief in which it landed Comte, so surely did a broad general oversight of the world and Nature, clear away the cobwebs, and confirm my belief in a Supreme Being. Of the truth of the law itself I had no doubt, but all my collateral principles ran counter to the conclusion to which the law appeared to lead. I felt sure, therefore, that there must be a flaw somewhere in the process of deduction, and set myself to work to find it out. At last I got my eye on it, and

hope that it may not prove, like the egg of Columbus, so trite as to be unworthy the reader's attention.

The law, to repeat it once more, is that when the natural *laws* of phenomena are unknown, events are referred to the agency of *wills* like our own. The inference Comte draws is, that the belief in wills or deities is a mere makeshift to conceal our ignorance of natural causes, and that now that almost all cultivated persons believe that all events whatsoever are explainable by natural causes, there is no room for a Deity at all, and no reason left for believing in His existence. Now, I will not deny that if the belief in God rested on the necessity of finding some supernatural explanation for natural phenomena not otherwise accounted for, such belief would be soon doomed to extinction. Where the fallacy lies is in the assumption that there is nothing more requiring explanation than the connexion of the various links in the chain of phenomena constituting the Universe, whereas the fact is, the chain itself, *as a whole*, has still to be accounted for. It is not enough that you should account by natural causes for how I came here from my parents, and the world preceding me, you must also account for my being here at all. It is not enough that you should explain how the law of Evolution necessitates the appearance of the stones, trees, flowers, animals, and men, such as we know them, you have still to explain why the original atoms out of which these things were evolved were so loaded with attractive and repulsive forces, and not *otherwise*. A further illustration will perhaps serve to make my meaning more clear to the reader. Take, for example, a cannon fired by electricity. In the earlier stages of human progress, as the connexion of the different links in the process by which the cannon is fired would not be understood, an invisible will would be believed to be stationed at each point of connexion—at the junction of the battery with the wires, and of the wires with the gunpowder—in order to account for the phenomena observed. But, from the time that civilization had advanced far enough

to enable men to account for the connexion of the different parts by natural causes, no invisible interference would be necessary at any point of the circuit, and none would be believed in. And yet, if no invisible will were necessary at any point of the chain, we should still be bound to refer the contrivance *as a whole* to an intelligent will. It is the same with the World. At one time the connexions of the various phenomena were so little understood, that deities had to be assumed at almost every link in the chain; after a while, only here and there a one was assumed at the more hidden connexions; until finally only one Deity was necessary, and He was allowed to interfere only on rare occasions, and in certain more or less defined ways. At the present time, as I have said, it is generally believed that all phenomena whatsoever are explainable by natural causes. Does this fact, if true, necessarily do away with the Deity? On the contrary, it only shifts Him further back—from interference at the connexions of the links, to the design, aim, and reason of the whole. Before the law of gravitation was discovered, Kepler believed that the planets were kept in their orbits by spirits who guided their courses; that is to say, when the natural cause of the movement was unknown, he referred it to a will like his own. When gravitation was discovered, it was supposed to be a sufficient cause and no further questions were asked about it. But does not gravitation itself, and the part it plays in the system of things, require a reason? Comte, and the Materialists ignore or forget that even after the successive links in the chain of phenomena are found to be explained by natural laws, the chain *as a whole*, in past, present, and future, is itself a *fact* requiring explanation. And as this is a fact that can never be referred to natural causes for explanation, we are bound, by the very terms of the law we are discussing, to refer it to an intelligent Will or Deity. Not to do so would be to stultify the very law to which we have given our adhesion, and thereby to break up that harmony of the mind which we have seen to

be, for mortals, the last and only test of truth, the last and only foundation for belief. I am aware it may be said that we have already discovered so many natural causes for phenomena that were formerly unaccountable, or believed to be supernatural, that there is no reason why, at some future time, we should not discover the cause of the Universe itself. In reply, I would only say that the discoveries of man that constitute his civilization, are really discoveries of the *laws* of phenomena, not real causes at all, and therefore that the cause of the Universe can never be known, but must be referred to an intelligent Will or Deity, the nature of that Will—whether it be good or bad, infinite or finite, and the like—being a fair subject for differences of opinion, according to the depth of insight of the observer into the constitution of that *effect* which is known as the World.

And here I desire to refer to an anomaly in Comte which I have by no means overlooked, but which for convenience I have reserved for this place. The reader will have observed that I have assumed that Comte denied the existence of the Deity. Now this is not precisely and literally the fact. Although he really did not believe in His existence, and although all his arguments, as we have seen, lead to such disbelief, he nevertheless does not go so far as absolutely to deny His existence. On the contrary, he asserts that if you will have a hypothesis of the World (which he thinks very foolish of you), the hypothesis of an Intelligent Mind is more probable than Atheism, but it is at best only a hypothesis. The reason of this discrepancy between the logical outcome of his principles as well as his own private belief on the one hand, and his avowed position on the other, is this—that while he felt that there was no necessity to assume a Deity in order to explain the connexion of the *separate* links in the chain of phenomena known as the Universe he could not rid himself of the obvious implication of his own law, that the Universe, *as a whole*, must be referred to a cause, and that that cause must be an intelligent Will. But by making his own *belief* co-extensive

only with what can be scientifically *known* (the fallacy of which I have already demonstrated), he was driven to deny practically the existence of a Deity; and by making Humanity the object of his religion, he was bound practically to ignore Him altogether.

Having thus shown that Comte's two great arguments against the existence of the Deity fall to the ground, before proceeding further I feel bound to give greater completeness to the present discussion by showing positive reasons why the belief in the Deity is necessary to the harmony of the mind. But first I must make some preliminary observations to clear up misconceptions and put the reader in a better position for judging the issues involved. To begin with, I would observe that just as the image of a camera on the wall is but the enlarged picture of the image in the instrument, so theories of the World are but enlarged pictures of theories of the Human Mind, and are framed on the model of our own personal experiences. I am aware, of course, that among a large number of advanced minds at the present time, nothing is considered more absurd and out of date than what is called Anthropomorphism, or the endowing of the Great Cause of things with human attributes. To believe that the Deity is constructed after the model of our own mind, is considered as ridiculous as to believe that the earth is the centre of the Universe, and human beings the objects for whose special delectation the whole galaxy of suns and planets and stars have been created. Nevertheless, in spite of the agreement and weight of opinion on this point, I shall venture to affirm, on the contrary, that to believe that the Cause of the Universe can be conceived of in terms other than those of our own personality (or part of our personality), is as hopeless a hallucination as to believe that by any effort whatever one can jump off one's own shadow, or lift oneself out of one's own boots. Indeed, after running through the systems of philosophers with an eye to this question, I will undertake to show in any

system of Philosophy whatever that has a coherent scheme, where the author's conception of the Cause of Things is drawn from theories or experiences of the human mind. And although many have imagined that they have dodged the inevitable conditions, none have succeeded in more than appearance. What they have done is this—they have either made the Deity a reflection of human attributes of so impalpable and abstract a character as not to be recognisable as human, or they have made Him a reflection of a *part* of the human mind, and that too a part so low and instinctive in its nature as to appear at first sight quite impersonal. Spinoza, for example, of all thinkers, had perhaps the greatest objection to conceiving of the Deity after the model of his own mind, and in his system of Philosophy he fancied he had evaded the difficulty by making God a mere affair of Extension and Thought. But, as Dr. Martineau has so well pointed out, where did he get the idea of Extension but from his own body, or of Thought but from his own mind? Extension and Thought are simply the two most abstract and universal predicates of body and mind respectively. And it is precisely because they are so abstract and shadowy, so bloodless and impalpable, that they appeared to Spinoza to be quite impersonal, and free from any taint of Anthropomorphism. Nevertheless, a little reflection shows that, although so ghostlike and impalpable, they are but shadows and emanations of ourselves.

Herbert Spencer, too the most uncompromising, perhaps, of all the present opponents of Anthropomorphism, finding himself unable to deny a cause for the visible Universe, craves about him to find one that shall be quite above suspicion. He at last finds what he is seeking for in an Unknown Force and imagines that he has thereby escaped those toils into which so many have fallen. But just as Spinoza's Deity was a kind of beatified ghost of Man projected into Space, Spencer's Deity is the projection of a certain idea—the idea of force—drawn from the lowest and least characteristic *part* of our personality,

viz., the sense-perceptions. To have made the Great Cause of things wise, just, and good, would have been to have shocked Spencer by its glaring Anthropomorphism, but to make Him an Unknown Force shorn of all those attributes of wisdom, justice, and goodness that are distinctively human, was to make it appear, unless carefully scrutinized, that having so little characteristic of human beings, He had nothing in common with them at all. And yet, when we come to look into it, we find that the idea of force is, as I have said above, drawn from a *part* of ourselves, viz., our sense-perceptions, and is, in so far, anthropomorphic. So that Spencer, instead of making the Great Cause quite impersonal, as he believed he was doing, really made Him after the image of the lowest and least distinctive part of our personality. And after railing at Anthropomorphism because it endowed the Deity with the *higher* attributes of human nature, he falls straightway into the same pit himself, only, instead of the higher attributes, he endows the Deity with ideas drawn from those *lowest* attributes which we have in common with the brutes. It is evident, therefore, that in all enquiries concerning the origin of things, the question is not whether we are going to fashion the Cause of the World after the image of ourselves, for that no mortal can avoid, but whether we shall fashion Him from superficial and one-sided theories of ourselves, or from wide and harmonious ones.

If, then, the Cause of the Universe must be conceived of in terms of our own experience, it is evident that the whole question as to whether we shall believe in an intelligent Will or Deity or not, will turn on what is involved in the true idea of causation. If we understand by causation what is meant by it in scientific investigations, viz., the most conspicuous *physical antecedent*, it is evident that to fully satisfy the demand for cause it would only be necessary that things should have been evolved out of one another in an endless series through all Time, and by no means necessary that there should be some

intelligent Will underlying the whole procession of phenomena in past, present, and future. But if, on the other hand, we believe that real causation always comes with it the idea of will, it is evident that to give that harmony to the mind on which alone truth can repose, we must believe in an intelligent Will as the Cause of things, or, in other words, a Deity. According, therefore, to our idea of causation will be our religious belief. Now, to arrive at a clear conclusion on this point, I will begin by observing that the only cause of which we can have any knowledge or experience is that of our own wills in moving our bodies, or objects around us, and consists therefore, in the passage from a *mental* act to a *physical* act, from mind to matter. And as this is our only experience of causation, it is evident (if we are bound to construe the Cause of things in terms of our own experience) that if left to our own native intuitions we should, as all religions have done, refer the Universe to the agency of some great Mind known as the Deity. In so doing, we should be giving that harmony to the mind which true belief demands. But our conclusion although simple and rational, is not allowed to pass unchallenged. Science interposes and asserts that that mental act of will which we imagine to be the only true idea of cause (as indeed it is the only conscious experience of cause), is at bottom not a *real* cause at all, but is merely a mental manifestation or shadow of a real cause, which real cause is the vibration and molecular activity of the brain and nervous centres. So that what is involved in real causation, according to Physical Science, is not the passage of a *mental* act into a *physical* one, but merely the passage of a *physical antecedent* into a *physical consequent*, according to the laws of its own proper nature, the mental act called the will being nothing but a mere shadow and attendant of the physical molecular vibrations, and playing no more part as a real cause than any other shadow. If, then, our theory of the Universe is, as we have seen, merely a projection of our theory of our own minds and if in our own minds the

will is not a real cause at all, but is merely a shadow of the real cause; it is evident that the belief in a great Mind or Will as the cause of the Universe must fall to the ground, and be superseded by that materialistic view which asserts that there is nothing more in the Universe than a series of physical antecedents and consequents evolving out of one another through all Time.

Now, in replying to this position taken up by the Materialists, I shall not attempt so much to impeach the facts on which they rely, as to show that, metaphorically speaking, they are looking at the world from between their legs, and in consequence, instead of harmony and truth, can get nothing but chaos and confusion. All our conversation assumes that we are as conscious of possessing intellect, sense of beauty, music, and the like, as we are of possessing what is called will. If therefore you insist that the will has no *real* existence, but is merely the mental manifestation or shadow of molecular vibrations in the brain, there is no logical alternative but that you should deny *real* existence to our other conscious mental attributes. On the same grounds that you deny the real existence of the will, I can deny the real existence of the intellect. I can justly affirm that it, too, is only a mental manifestation or shadow of certain molecular vibrations in the brain substance, and therefore can have no real existence. Beauty, too, I can justly regard as a mere illusion, not a reality—a mere arrangement of matter in certain forms, and which vanishes if looked at through the microscope. Music, too, is merely the effect of certain material vibrations on material tissue, and therefore has no real existence. From the same standpoint, magnanimity, heroism, virtue, and even truth itself, equally with sensuality and baseness, are but movements of certain cells in certain directions, nothing more. So that if you will insist in looking at the world through your legs, and, like that Materialist who carried away from a performance of Paganini only the number of times that great player had moved

his elbow during the entertainment will insist on taking as your standpoint of observation, not the *mental* attributes of man, but the *physical* basis of these attributes, you will not only kill the will as a *real* existence, but you will also kill intellect, poetry, music, truth, and all ranks and differences of thought and sentiment. In a word, you will destroy every 'category' of the mind, and will leave nothing in the Universe but a dead hulk, a barren desert of matter and motion, and as even the one known only through the senses, they too may be denied, for there is no reason why the Universe should exist in reality as the particular constitution of our senses makes it appear to us.

Such is the chaos into which the world would fall were it looked at from the Materialistic point of view. To get its harmonies (and, after all these harmonies, whether they be brought out of matter or spirit, be about all the truth we can ever hope to reach in this life), it is evident that we must not look at what can be *theoretically* questioned or denied, but at what must be *practically* believed. I am bound to believe in the existence of the external world, and in my search for truth to build on it as on a real and solid foundation, although philosophers may deny that it has any real existence in itself. I practically believe in the difference between virtue and vice, magnanimity and meanness of spirit, self-sacrifice and selfishness, although Materialists, reducing them all alike to the vibrations of indifferent molecules, are logically bound to deny any *real* difference between them. I practically believe in the real existence of intelligence, beauty, music, poetry, and truth although these, too like the rest, may all be resolved into the movements of unmeaning cells and forces. In the same way, therefore, I am bound to believe in the *real* existence of will although Materialists affirm that it is only the shadow and accompaniment of molecular motion in nervous centres. If, then the harmony of the mind demands a cause for the visible Universe, and if the only experience I have of cause is the

mental act of will, it is evident that I am bound, by the necessity of the mind, to regard the Universe as the effect of an intelligent Will or Deity. Not that I *know* that the Deity has a real existence, any more than I know that the external world has a real existence; all I know is that I am so constituted that to give harmony to the mind, I must *believe* in His existence, otherwise all my consolidated beliefs would fall into chaos and ruin. Nor do I feel it incumbent on me to explain *how* a will or mind can be the cause of the world. I do not know how one unit of matter can attract another while repelling it, nevertheless I am compelled to believe it. I do not know how the mind is united with the matter of the brain and its molecular activity. It is not connected by the relation of cause and effect in the scientific sense, for that demands *equivalence* between the two terms, and mind can have no equivalence either in nature or force with brain substance. It is enough that I must believe in the fact of the connexion. I do not know how my will can be the cause of my bodily movements, it is enough that I should believe the fact. So, too, in the same way, it is enough that I should *believe* in the Deity without explaining *how* He is the Cause of Things.

Besides, as the material Universe depends for its existence on the constitution of our minds, it is not necessary that I should account for matter, but only for that on which matter depends, viz., mind; and that an intelligent mind should be the cause of an intelligent mind is not impossible to realise.

But we still have to ask, if *real* causation involves the idea of will, what is that *scientific* causation which is equally authoritative? In reply, I would say, that the relation of antecedent and consequent which constitutes what is called scientific causation, although a necessary relation, is not a relation of cause and effect at all. To make this clear, let us imagine the Universe in process of evolution from its nebulous condition onward through the formation of stars and planets, down to the appearance of animals and plants and man. Now,

in the language of Science the forces at work in the world of yesterday are said to be the causes of the forces seen in the phenomena of to day which forces are in turn the causes of the phenomena of to morrow. That is to say, the same quantity of matter and motion in the world of to day was there yesterday, and will be to morrow, only under changed forms. To say, therefore, that the world of yesterday, to day and to morrow are connected by a necessary bond called causation, is simply to say that they are connected by the necessity there is of the same quantity of force remaining the same in spite of changes of form. At bottom, it amounts to nothing more than the necessary but identical proposition that two and two always make or *cause* four, or that four is always the result or *effect* of two and two or their equivalents. This is no more a case of real causation than if you took a piece of clay in one shape and squeezed it into another and then again into a third, and called the first shape the cause of the second, and the second of the third. The truth is, the term cause, as used in Science is merely a convenient expression, it is not a philosophical one. Scientific causes are only *orderly effects*. The stone thrown into the air falls to the ground. Why? Because the attraction of gravitation brings it down that is to say, only because all other things are seen to fall under the like circumstances. But to the question why things should fall at all, why gravitation should take part in the system of things at all, no answer can be given but that so it stands in the will of God. Were still further proof needed that scientific causation is not real causation, it would be found in the fact that Science uses the words *cause* and *law* interchangeably. For example, when the *law* of gravitation was discovered, many movements of the heavenly bodies that had hitherto been inexplicable were said to be explained, so that if a stone fell to the ground and the *cause* was asked it was said to be gravitation. It is the same at the present time when any new *law* is discovered, for it enables us to assign causes to whole groups of previously-

obscure effects. If cause and law are in Science thus interchangeable, it is evident that scientific causation is not real causation at all ; for what has the mere order of phenomena to do with the real causation of them ?

CHAPTER III.

A CONFUSION OF PLANES.

HAVING shown in the last chapter that Comte cannot logically get rid of the Deity, I now proceed to the second division of the subject, and shall endeavour to show that, even if he could get rid of Him, he could not make Humanity the object of human worship. That Humanity is not the *natural* object of Religion, and by no logical artifice can be made so, will become apparent if we glance at the religions of the world historically. No one, I presume, will deny that in Fetichism the object of worship was not the star, animal, or stone, as such, but the star, animal, or stone, as believed to be the seat of some indwelling will or spirit, which will or spirit was the real object of worship. So, too, in Polytheism it was not the thunderbolt, the tempest, or the fire that was the real object of prayer and propitiation, but the invisible will of Jove, Neptune, or Vulcan, believed to be behind these phenomena and controlling them. And, as we all know, the God of Monotheism is not anything visible or tangible, but is that great Mind and Will that presides over the destinies of the Universe. If, then, the various historical religions have had as objects of worship those invisible Beings that transcend the sphere of experience, it follows that, logically, the object of any future religion must lie in the same *plane* of the transcendental and invisible. Even Spencer, the most inexorable of realists, admits this when he says that, ‘if knowledge cannot monopolise consciousness, if it must always continue possible for the mind to dwell upon that which transcends knowledge, then there can never cease to be a place for something of the nature of Religion; since Religion, under all its forms, is distinguished

from every thing else in this, that its subject-matter is that which passes the sphere of experience.' But Comte, noting the wide diversity in the objects of the various sentiments at different times, sees no reason why the religious sentiment should not have an equally wide range in its choice of objects, and argues that if courage, for example, which at one time had personal prowess as its object, now has so different a thing as the defence of moral principles, there is no reason why religion, which at one time had a Deity as its object, should not now have Humanity. Now, the fallacy in this is evident. For if Courage, Love, and the other sentiments change their objects according to men's insight and stage of culture, the change is merely from one object to another in the *same* plane—the plane of experience, and is, therefore, quite legitimate. And if Religion, also, has changed its objects from time to time, has changed from many gods to a few gods, from a few gods to one god, from bad gods to good gods, nevertheless the objects all lie in the same plane—the plane of the transcendental—and therefore the change is quite legitimate. But when Comte proposes to make Humanity the object of religion, he at once dashes and confounds together two planes of thought which the intuitions of men in all ages have kept distinct and separate, viz., the sphere of religion, which has always lain in the invisible and transcendental, and the sphere of duty, which has always lain in the work-a-day world of men and women. This is as fatal a jumble and confusion of mental categories as if in our life and conversation we should quietly assume as identical such different attributes as love and sensuality, reverence and fear, duty and self-interest, honesty and prudence; and on this assumed identity should proceed to rear a vast and complicated system of thought. That Comte really does make religion and duty identical, will be seen by a single quotation from the writings of one of his most eminent living representatives. 'The substance and crown of Religion,' says Mr. Frederic Harrison, 'is to answer the question what is my duty in the

world, my duty to my fellow-beings, my duty to the world and all that is in it and of it. Duty, moral purpose, moral improvement, is the last word and deepest word of Religion. Religion is summed up in Duty.' Indeed, we should have known beforehand from Comte's general view of the world that he must of necessity have made religion and duty identical. Regarding Humanity as an organism, and individuals as the cells of which it is composed (each cell, while doing its own separate work, nevertheless working harmoniously for the good of the whole), and believing, moreover, in no existence *behind* the visible world, no underlying Cause giving to things their aim and reason it is clear that the problem of the world must have been, for him, how to make these separate individuals, in each of whom self interest is predominant, so far subordinate their self interest, as to work harmoniously for the welfare of Humanity as a whole. That is to say, his object was to discover what is the duty of each man to his neighbour and to the whole society of which he forms a part. In other words, Humanity was both the reason and object of his endeavours, both his duty and his religion. That Comte should have centred both religion and duty in one and the same object when their natural objects lie on altogether distinct planes, was virtually to admit that he had no object for religion in the sense in which that term is used and understood by men. Having no belief in any existence beyond the visible world, he had no sphere for the exercise of what men call religion. But in his anxiety to erect a system of thought that should satisfy every side of man's nature (and that, too, on the hypothesis that there was no background of existence behind the visible world), he was obliged to knock into one, two sentiments which the intuitions of mankind have always kept apart, and so forever vitiated the system of thought which he so laboriously constructed. Spencer, too, fell into the same error, but in a different way. Like Comte he wished to reconcile Religion and Science and the only way he could do this effectually was by showing that

at bottom they both rested on the same basis, and not on two distinct bases as was generally supposed. But, unlike Comte, he believed, as we have seen, that the sphere of religion was in the invisible and transcendental; and accordingly, while Comte made Religion rest on the same basis as Science, viz., the real world, he made Science rest on the same basis as Religion, viz., the transcendental world. The attempt to make so real and material a thing as Science rest on so transcendental a basis as Religion, gave rise, in the case of Spencer, as I have elsewhere shown,* to the most ingenious exhibition of intellectual sleight-of-hand that has been known in modern philosophy.

But before we have completely established our proof that Humanity cannot logically be made the object of Religion, we must confront the still more plausible argument of Comte, viz., that the feelings of reverence, love, and the like which make up the religious sentiment, have their natural and appropriate objects in our fellow-men, and that therefore to look for them in another world is quite gratuitous and unnecessary. Now, in reference to this argument I wish to remark, by way of preliminary, that any sentiment, passion, or idea, that is strong enough to bind the discordant elements of man's nature into a unity of aim and effort, may in a certain sense be said to be his religion. When the gallant knight-errant in the fairy tale embarked on perilous and romantic adventures to win the smiles and favour of the fair lady whose haughty beauty had pierced his heart, and laid him captive at her feet, his devotion may justly enough be said to have been his religion. When John Stuart Mill said of his wife, 'her memory is to me religion, and her bright example, summing up as it does all excellence, is the standard by which I regulate my life,' he, too, used the term in a sufficiently distinct and intelligible sense. And when in popular parlance we hear any great master-passion by which a man is impelled, spoken of as his religion—whether it be money-getting, ambition, fame, position, or the struggle to realize the

*In the chapter on Herbert Spencer in my "Religion of the Future."

ideal in the drama, poetry, or art, we are all aware of the sense in which the term is used. It may be said to have been the religion of Alexander to found a universal empire; of Wendell Phillips, to free the slave; of Mazzini and Garibaldi, to consummate the unification of Italy. And so in the same way if the idea of Humanity, like that of Patriotism, is strong enough to give unity of aim and effect to a man's life, and wide enough to give unity of aim and effect to the lives of all, there is no objection to calling it a religion. But to imagine that this derivative and more or less metaphorical meaning of the word is the sense in which it is commonly understood, is as puerile as to imagine that when a man speaks of being in Heaven after coming out of some intense agony, his words are to be taken literally. By Religion, in the common acceptation, is meant the belief men have in the great Cause of things and their relation to that Cause. For Comte to attach any other meaning to the terms, and afterward to argue as if he meant by it what we mean by it, is to completely confuse and mystify the reader. Comte had no belief in a great Cause of the Universe, and therefore had no object of Religion in the common acceptation of the term. But instead of dropping the word when the object of the thing itself was gone, he still retained the word, but gave it quite a different interpretation. Having no object for the term in its usual meaning, he fell back on the derivative meaning given to it in the above instances, and played with the two as if they were identical. Hence the reader's perplexity.

If, then, Religion in its true sense means the belief men have in the nature of the great Cause of Things and their relation to that Cause, it does not follow that because the feelings of reverence, love, and the like, which make up the religious sentiment, have their natural sphere among our fellow-men, our fellow-men are necessarily the objects of Religion. On the contrary, it is because men are the *symbols* and representatives in Time of that great Cause which is the true object of Religion.

that they call forth in us the religious sentiment. Nor is there anything extraordinary or exceptional in this. In olden times, the person of a king was sacred because he was believed to be the vice-regent of God; at the present time, because he is the representative of the unity and dignity of the State; in either case, in virtue of his symbolical and representative capacity only. It is the same with the persons of ambassadors, and of all state-officials from the highest to the lowest. Even flags, crowns, sceptres, and other symbols of king and country, although they absolutely have no intrinsic value, call forth the same sentiments of loyalty and patriotism as the things themselves which they represent. So, too, with Nature. The feeling, for example, that goes out from us to a beautiful flower is not due to the flower itself, in so far as it is a mere anatomical structure, a mere arrangement of form and colour, but is due rather to that hidden invisible Beauty out of which it springs, and of which its little life is the transient manifestation. It is this invisible Beauty on which we love to dwell in contemplating the flower and the short-lived splendour in which it is arrayed. Were its beauty nothing more than the pleasure afforded the eye by the mere harmony of material outline and the blending of tints, its poetic charms would vanish. And hence, if beauty, as is believed, is one side of the religious sentiment, the object of the sentiment would be not the flower itself, but that which it expresses, the hint it gives us of that deep sea of Beauty into which it is but one small inlet. 'Things more excellent than any symbol are seen through symbols.' It is the same, too, with those great human attributes of magnanimity, heroism, expansion and elevation of mind, which call forth reverence, love, and admiration from human souls. For just as the dead, cold, marble of the statue calls forth our admiration not on its own account but because it is the expression of the sculptor's mind; as beauty of form is loved less for itself than as the natural symbol of the beauty of mind and character; so beauty and elevation of mind them-

selves are revered and admired because they are the highest symbols we have on earth of that Divine Mind of which they are the temporary embodiment—that Divine Mind to which all civilization and progress is the struggle to more and more nearly approximate. It is this Divine Mind which is the secret magnet and centre of attraction for human souls, and not the passing human forms in which it is housed and lodged for a season. So that, instead of Humanity being, as Comte believed the true object of Religion because our religious feelings find in human beings appropriate objects for their satisfaction, our religious feelings, on the contrary, are called forth by Humanity because human beings are the *symbols* of that Divine Cause which is the only true object of the religious sentiment. It is quite true, as Comte contends, that the object of Religion must be a being endowed with attributes that can call forth reverence, admiration and love, but, unless the intuitions of all ages are a mistake, that object cannot be any being like ourselves or aggregate of beings called Humanity, but must be that great Power in whom we and all other beings have our roots, that invisible Spring of Light and Life in whom we are bound to believe, but whose effects alone we are permitted to see.

And lastly, if we cannot *logically* make Humanity the object of Religion, neither can we make it *practically* the object of human worship. Now, it must be remembered in this connexion that it was on the enthusiasm which Humanity was expected to inspire, when elevated into an object of worship, that Comte relied, to counteract those selfish instincts of human nature which are naturally so much stronger than the moral impulses. To excite the enthusiasm necessary to make a man forget his own petty interests an object must not only be believed to be a true object, but must also have the power of kindling the imagination, or that side of our nature which responds to the infinite, the intangible, the unlimited. A woman, for example, may have all the virtues, and may

demonstrably be the true object of a man's love and devotion, and yet, unless she touches his imagination by suggesting a higher excellence than anywhere appears in her actions or conversation, unless indeed she opens out a range of possibility both of heart and soul that shall run far away into the incalculable and unlimited, she will excite no lofty enthusiasm, no heroic devotion, no self-sacrifice. In the same way, too, if a man is thoroughly to subjugate us and lead us after him, he must leave the impression of a greater range of thought and feeling than our own. But should we in our expanding life at last come up to his stature, and find that what was once to us immeasurable and incalculable has now a finite and limited value only, his power over us will be gone, and he himself will never again be to us the same splendid possibility which he was before. We have seen his limitations, and henceforward it is all over with him. Instead of being that boundless sea which we had imagined him, he has shrunk into a lake, a pond, on whose waters, indeed, we may disport ourselves perhaps, but whose shores, surveyable all around, excite none of that awe and emotion which are roused in us by the illimitable, the immeasurable, the unknown. It is evident, therefore, that a Religion which is to affect the daily life, must have as its object something that will fire the Imagination, either by its own inherent qualities or by the halo with which it has come to be invested. The imagination once kindled, the religious feelings will spring up spontaneously; and selfishness, reined in by the controlling emotion will be subordinated. All the old religions of the world had, in their gods, objects which gave infinite play to the imagination, by reason of the transcendent and immeasurable attributes with which they were endowed; and so called forth the religious emotions spontaneously. And we may confidently expect that any religion which shall take on itself to guide the future of mankind, must have as its object a Being having the like immeasurable and transcendent qualities. But Comte, instead of trying to find an object of

Religion that will naturally rouse the imagination, and so draw out the religious sentiment spontaneously, looks out for an object that he thinks ought to draw out the sentiment, and having found it, proceeds to set it before us in such an attractive form as to fire the imagination, hoping thereby to induce the feeling desired; like a man who, instead of waiting for the woman whom he must love, looks for one he ought to love, and then tries to throw such a romantic idea around her, as shall rouse the wished-for emotion. Believing that Humanity, if we are to do it any good, ought to call forth the reverence, love, and devotion of human souls, or, in a word, their religious sentiment, Comte proceeds to invest it with the necessary dignity, by calling it the Supreme Being, the Great Organism, and the like, thereby giving it all the power over the imagination which attaches to an idea so mystic and sublime.

Now, I must admit that if the conception of Humanity can be so presented as to rouse the Imagination, it may become an object of worship, whether it be the true object of Religion or not. For there can be no doubt that any idea or object that can kindle the imagination, may become an object of devotion, and may so far make a man subordinate his selfishness as to sacrifice himself to its pursuit, whether it be money, ambition, fame, power, position, love, science, poetry, or art. What, then, we ask, are those attributes which Comte sees in Humanity which are to give it that power over the imagination necessary to make it an object of worship? In the first place, says Comte, it is a real existence, while we individuals are only metaphysical abstractions. And why is it a real existence and we mere abstractions? Because it is a great Organism, and we are but cells in its huge frame. And why is it an organism? Because, like other organisms, it has gone through regular stages of growth and evolution, known as the Theological, Metaphysical and Positive stages. In a word, says Comte, it is the Supreme Being in whom our little individual lives are absorbed and lost, out of which they grow, and into

which they return ; just as the individual cells of a bodily organism die and are replaced by others, while the body, as a whole, lives on and retains its continuity throughout. And therefore, argues Comte, it not only ought to rouse our imagination, by its greatness, its vastness, and its power, but if looked at steadily and fixedly enough, it is bound to do so. Now I have already shown in a former chapter that Humanity is an organism in a *metaphorical* sense merely, not in that strict and definite sense attached to the term in biology, and adopted by Comte as the basis of his analogy. I will only remark, in passing, that if you are to consider Humanity an organism, merely because individual human beings are connected by certain necessary bonds of thought and feeling (and therefore must necessarily evolve in definite stages), there is no reason why you should not also call a kaleidoscope an organism, because its fragments are so related that, shake them how you will, they will always arrange themselves in certain regular forms ; or the World in general an organism, because, according to the Evolution hypothesis, each thing is so related to all, that, as Carlyle says, not an Indian can quarrel with his squaw on the shores of Lake Winnipeg, but will make the price of beaver rise ; not a pebble can be thrown from the hand, but will alter the centre of gravity of the Universe. There can be no doubt that human beings will always form themselves into an organism, in whatever situation they may be placed ; but that Humanity is a ready-made organism, in the biological sense used by Comte, is a purely arbitrary and gratuitous assumption, and therefore a most hazardous basis on which to construct a system of Philosophy. There is little chance, therefore, that this transparent fiction of Humanity being the Supreme Being should throw such an imaginative aureole about it as to make it an object of worship. But there is still another fiction on which Comte relies to make Humanity an object of worship, and that is, that Humanity is *greater* than ourselves. The reason he thinks Humanity is greater than ourselves is,

because to the stored-up knowledge and experience of the generations that have preceded us, we owe all that is best in ourselves, the greater part of our knowledge, our civilization, our culture, our habits of life, our morality. Now, the absurdity of this view will become apparent if we remember that, now that Science has shown the continuity of all species, the earliest generations of men must have owed all that was best in themselves to the accumulated stores of wisdom of the latest generation of apes; and therefore, if we are to worship the generations of men that have preceded us, there is no reason why we should not also worship the generations of apes that preceded them; and so on down through molluscs and worms and frog-spawn to protoplasm itself. You cannot draw the line at Humanity, and say that you will worship no species lower and more remote in the scale; for, in doing so you confess that something has been implanted in man that is not the result of previous experience among the lower races—a proposition that runs quite counter to all scientific modes of interpretation. Besides, for an object to be greater than ourselves, it need not be greater in mere bulk and acquisition, but must be *higher* in the scale of being, and that the preceding generations of men were higher than us there is no reason for believing.

The truth is, it is impossible so to irradiate Humanity by any halo of pleasing fictions as to make it an object of worship. Who could worship, for example, the Esquimaux, the Fijian, the Bashi-Bazouk, the Digger Indian, the base and grovelling Oriental and slave? Who has ever done so, or pretended to do so? And if we cannot worship the individual, why the tribe? If not the tribe, why a number of tribes, or nations, or even the human race at large? I am aware that Comte considers that not all men are members of the entity called Humanity, but only the *good* of present and preceding generations. Are the good, then, to be my religion? They may and shall command my sympathy and respect, but cannot

necessarily have such power over my imagination as to subjugate my heart and soul.

And besides, if Humanity is to be made the object of our religion, what will become of Nature, and in consequence of the world of Poetry and Art? To have got rid of a Mind and Soul behind the visible world, and then to make Humanity our religion—the object of all our aims, our affections, our efforts—is to leave Nature outside, as a corpse, and make of poetry and art an unreality and imposture. It is only because we believe in a Soul behind the visible Universe that the features of Nature are so pleasing and elevating to the mind. To believe that Nature is a corpse, and the landscape, in consequence, only a dead inventory of material objects, is to kill all poetry and art, which exist indeed on the assumption that beauty of form always refers back to beauty of soul and essence. No dead or merely material thing can delight and elevate us, unless, as in sculpture and painting, it suggests the corresponding life and soul. All beauty, whether of person or character; all greatness, whether of sentiment or life, is worshipped and loved, precisely because it is believed to be the expression of that inward, spiritual, and diviner Beauty which is the real object of human worship. And hence there is no logical alternative, but either to admit a Divine Mind behind the world, or else to confess that all poetry all enthusiasm, all art, all worship, is an impertinence and sham. Comte saw this, and perceived, moreover, that all poetry and art must fade and wither unless fed by sentiment. He saw also that sentiment can be called out by *mind* only, and not by material things. But he had already got rid of all mind behind Nature, and therefore had no place for sentiment, and, in consequence, for poetry and art. To get out of the difficulty, therefore, he proposed that we should give our scientific facts and conceptions such an imaginative setting, as would satisfy the moral and æsthetic sentiments otherwise bereaved. Among other things, for example, he recommends us to endow the External World with *feeling*,

just as if it were a person, and so be able to imagine it as helping man to ameliorate the universal order. In this way, by rounding off truth with fiction, he hoped to give that satisfaction and harmony to the mind, which is lost and destroyed when great sentiments are denied their legitimate sphere of gratification. Even Space, empty Space, we are to imagine to have feeling, and so make it an object of adoration as representative of fatality! That is to say, having got rid of mind in general behind the external world, he is obliged to bring it back piecemeal, and under every object that is to call forth our sentiments to insert a piece of will and personality. Having left no stone unturned to depose the Deity, he is obliged to reinstate Him under those thinly veiled fictions which he insists on our treating as if they were realities. No greater satire on his system of philosophy could possibly be imagined. Having, with infinite trouble got the Deity out of the way, in order that he might make Humanity the object of Religion, in his fears lest Nature, thus deprived of her animating principle, should become a corpse, and Poetry and Art an unreality and imposture, he is forced to bring Him back again, cut up into the little fetichistic forms. And, after repudiating the Deity, because he believed Him to be a fiction of the imagination, he ends by deliberately asking us to make believe that we believe those fictions by which he replaced Him, and all for fear lest the harmony of the mind should be destroyed, *not perceiving that real harmony can arise only out of a consensus of true beliefs, not fictitious ones.* Indeed, the very reason for his objecting to make God the object of Religion was, because the belief in God was in his opinion not a true belief, and therefore on it nothing solid and enduring could be built. That a great system of thought should thus be reduced at last to make out its harmonies by an elaborate tissue of fictions, is the best proof of the existence at its core of some besetting fallacy, which fallacy, under a few of its many different disguises, I hope, in the foregoing pages, to have clearly pointed out.

PART IV.—RELIGION.

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY.

IN the last section we saw that the term Religion may be used in two quite different senses; in the one, its true and accepted sense, it means the conceptions men have formed of the great Cause of things, and their relation to that Cause; in the other, its secondary and occasional sense, it is used of anything that has the power of binding the human sentiments and desires into a unity of aim and effort. We saw, too, that Humanity could not possibly be made the object of Religion in its first and true sense, but at most only in that derivative and more or less metaphorical sense in which country, art, love, money, and the like, may be, and sometimes are, with quite as much appropriateness, said to be men's religion. Religion being thus restored to its old and well-understood meaning, it is necessary now to trace the laws of the human mind involved in its construction, with the view of estimating its effects on what we have already seen to be the great end of all civilization, viz., the elevation and expansion of the individual mind.

During the long ages in which Religion was believed to rest on Revelation alone, to be something imposed on the mind from *without* by divine authority, rather than evolved from the reason and imagination *within*, no attempt was likely to be made to account for its various forms by natural laws alone. When men believed that the observed laws of Nature were to be rejected unless they harmonized with the first chapter of Genesis, and

the observed laws of the human mind unless they harmonized with the dogmas of 'original sin' and 'redemption,' it was impossible that they should at the same time believe that these very dogmas themselves had sprung from the reason and imagination of men working on the material and social conditions under which they were placed. Men naturally enough believed that if Religion had a supernatural origin, it could not have had a natural one, if it sprang from the divine councils it could not have resulted from the working of the ordinary laws of human nature. But from the time that it was felt that Religion was as much a product of the secret workings of human thought and imagination as a poem or a work of art, that, as the planets from the sun, it was first of all thrown off from the central human spirit, and afterwards believed to have an independent objective origin of its own, the way was open for the discovery and enunciation of the laws on which it was constructed, and from which all its various forms have taken their rise. As yet, however, no one has attempted to trace these laws in anything like their entirety, or give them anything like scientific definiteness and precision. It is true, as we saw in a former chapter, that Comte has grasped one of the most pregnant of these laws—the law of wills and causes—but it is only one, and although its importance cannot be overestimated, it is nevertheless so large and sweeping in its character, as to account only for the most general phases through which Religion has passed—Animism, Fetichism, Polytheism, Monotheism—leaving the minutest structure of the various creeds still unaccounted for. Herbert Spencer, too, has undertaken to account for the origin, growth, and development of religions, on the hypothesis of Evolution. His mode of procedure is strictly scientific, and consists in searching among the records of existing savage races for the most simple and rudimentary form of religion and when this is found, in endeavouring to discover the circumstances of savage life that would most naturally account

for it. And so, after collecting the accounts of travellers from every quarter of the globe and collating them, he finds that the worship of the spirits of ancestors is the lowest form of existing religion, and thence concludes, from analogy, that in all probability it is the crude and undeveloped form from which all our present civilized religions have been evolved. On searching farther for the circumstances that would most naturally give rise to this form of worship, he finds them in the phenomena of dreams, and in the manifestations of diseases of the nervous system. The savage, having no scientific knowledge with which to correct the illusions of the mind, seems in his dreams to see his spirit travelling far away into distant regions, engaging in wondrous adventures, and returning again when he awakes. He thereupon concludes that there is a spirit within him that can come and go, can enter the body and leave it at pleasure. Carrying with him this idea, when he sees a fellow-savage convulsed with mania or epilepsy, what can he think but that the spirit of an enemy has entered the body, and is working its evil will there? And what more natural than that the fear of these evil spirits should lead to the worship of those most likely to protect him—the spirits of his ancestors—and to the endeavour to gain their favour by those rites, offerings, and ceremonies which would most have pleased them when alive? It is thus that Spencer finds a natural and easy explanation of the earliest form of existing religion, in the circumstances of savage life acting on the uncultured mind; later forms being developed from this, in a manner equally natural, and still bearing traces of their early origin. Now, my results and mode of procedure, although quite different, are in no way inconsistent with those of Spencer; on the contrary, they are rather the complement of them. For if all concrete religions must be the result of the union of two distinct factors—on the one hand, of certain laws of the human mind, and on the other, of certain circumstances and conditions of men—it is open to the student to investigate

either the circumstances, or the laws, or both. Given the religion—the worship of ancestral spirits and the like—Spencer subordinates the *laws of the mind* involved, and concentrates attention on the special *circumstances* most likely to produce it—the phenomena of dreaming, of nervous disorders, and the like. I, on the contrary, shall ignore the circumstances for the time being, and shall concentrate attention on those great laws of the human mind which must give rise to Religion under any circumstances. The differences in result to be anticipated from these two methods of procedure, viz., from determining the *circumstances*, and determining the *laws*, are these, that however probable the circumstances may be, they can never be verified, for we shall never more be able to see Religion in the process of formation; whereas, if once the laws can be discovered, they can, like gravitation, be verified at any time and in any place. Besides, the circumstances that gave rise to one particular religion will not explain another, whereas the laws involved in one are involved in all. And, more important still, a knowledge of the circumstances in which any religion takes its rise will throw no light on the *effects* of Religion on character and life, whereas the knowledge of the laws involved will lead directly, as we shall see, to a knowledge of its effects on mental and moral expansion, and thereby serve as guide to Action.

As to the effects of Religion on Life and Action, little has hitherto been done in the way of putting the subject on a scientific basis. The clergy of the various churches, pre-occupied in setting forth the attractions of their own particular forms, are indisposed for general views; and are, by reason of that narrowness of view which results from regarding their own special creed as absolutely true, disqualified for tracing the broad effects of Religion on human life; as lawyers, by reason of their pedantry, are said to be disqualified for the higher functions of statesmanship. Indeed, it is impossible that it should be otherwise, as the belief in Revelation consecrates equally each and every part of the sacred record, thereby

exalting the letter over the spirit, and so forbidding large and commanding views. Besides, what hope is there of getting a severe scientific estimate from men who are under such strong temptations to magnify the importance of the function they administer, and paint it *couleur de rose*; from men who are oppressed by the consciousness of having to address herds of mediæval worshippers, whose fixed, upraised eyes mark out, as with bayonet-points, the path in which they are to tread, and silently dictate that Religion should be shown to be the best of all possible expedients for making the most of both worlds?

On the other hand, the Materialists and Atheists, perceiving the hopelessness of reconciling many of the doctrines of religion with the verified results of Science, and remembering, moreover, the black record of crimes done in its name, regard it as of no benefit to mankind at all, but as a drawback rather, or even a curse—a break on the wheel of progress, an illusion of fanaticism or despair. So that while one set of persons regard it as of supreme importance, and another of no importance, or less than none, the way is open for anyone who shall estimate scientifically what, under each and all its forms, it can and does accomplish for man, and what, under no form whatever, it is capable of accomplishing. To break ground on a subject so interesting and important is the object of the present endeavour.

But, before the subject can be placed in all its bearings before the reader, it is necessary to clear the way by removing a few of the more prominent misconceptions that complicate or obscure it.

In the first place, then, I would remark that Religion, being the belief men have in the great Cause of things and their relation to that Cause, there is no hope of the laws on which it turns being scientifically determined, unless we are prepared to admit at the outset that, in whatever creed it may chance to be embodied, it is believed in precisely the same sense in which any other natural or human fact is believed. By this I mean, that it is accepted as a *reasonable* explanation of the phenomena

of the World and of Human Life, in the same sense in which the attraction of the moon is accepted as a reasonable explanation of the tides, or the attraction of the earth, of the fall of a leaf or stone. When it harmonizes completely with men's other beliefs, it is said to be a reasoned belief, when it does not so harmonize, and yet does not in its essence run counter to them, but is accepted, as is most frequently the case, on tradition or authority, it is still an intellectual belief, and is as much dependent on intellectual laws, as our belief in the Copernican theory of Astronomy (although we may not have followed in detail its various steps) is an intellectual belief dependent on intellectual laws. That this is the case, a moment's reflection should suffice to satisfy us. Why, for example do we reject the religions of savages and the lower races? Evidently because they run counter to our knowledge of the world and of the human mind, that is to say, because they are not *intellectually* credible to us. Why do the savages themselves believe in them? Evidently because they do not run counter to their knowledge and culture, such as it is, that is to say, because they are intellectually credible to them. Again, why do so many of the cultured and enlightened classes in Europe at the present time reject the Christian religion? The answer, as before, is that the various conceptions embodied in its creed run counter to beliefs founded on positive Science, and so can no longer be credited as they were before Science had reached its present stage of advancement. Indeed, so obvious is it to me that religious beliefs are accepted or rejected on precisely the same *intellectual* grounds as any other beliefs whatsoever, that I should have deemed it superfluous to insist on it so strongly, were it not that I am aware how profoundly the idea is discredited. Instead of being regarded as a matter of intellectual belief, of logical inference, Religion is regarded as a matter of faith, a mystery passing comprehension, an affair of sentiment and emotion, rather than of insight, a state of the heart, rather than of the head. Now, the preva-

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of the World and of Human Life, in the same sense in which the attraction of the moon is accepted as a reasonable explanation of the tides, or the attraction of the earth, of the fall of a leaf or stone. When it harmonizes completely with men's other beliefs, it is said to be a reasoned belief, when it does not so harmonize, and yet does not in its essence run counter to them, but is accepted, as is most frequently the case, on tradition or authority, it is still an intellectual belief, and is as much dependent on intellectual laws, as our belief in the Copernican theory of Astronomy (although we may not have followed in detail its various steps) is an intellectual belief dependent on intellectual laws. That this is the case, a moment's reflection should suffice to satisfy us. Why, for example do we reject the religions of savages and the lower races? Evidently because they run counter to our knowledge of the world and of the human mind, that is to say, because they are not *intellectually* credible to us. Why do the savages themselves believe in them? Evidently because they do not run counter to their knowledge and culture, such as it is, that is to say, because they are intellectually credible to them. Again, why do so many of the cultured and enlightened classes in Europe at the present time reject the Christian religion? The answer, as before, is that the various conceptions embodied in its creed run counter to beliefs founded on positive Science and so can no longer be credited as they were before Science had reached its present stage of advancement. Indeed, so obvious is it to me that religious beliefs are accepted or rejected on precisely the same *intellectual* grounds as any other beliefs whatsoever, that I should have deemed it superfluous to insist on it so strongly, were it not that I am aware how profoundly the idea is discredited. Instead of being regarded as a matter of intellectual belief, of logical inference, Religion is regarded as a matter of faith, a mystery passing comprehension, an affair of sentiment and emotion, rather than of insight, a state of the heart, rather than of the head. Now, the preva-

exalting the letter over the spirit, and so forbidding large and commanding views. Besides, what hope is there of getting a severe scientific estimate from men who are under such strong temptations to magnify the importance of the function they administer, and paint it *couleur de rose*; from men who are oppressed by the consciousness of having to address herds of mediæval worshippers, whose fixed, upraised eyes mark out, as with bayonet-points, the path in which they are to tread, and silently dictate that Religion should be shown to be the best of all possible expedients for making the most of both worlds?

On the other hand, the Materialists and Atheists, perceiving the hopelessness of reconciling many of the doctrines of religion with the verified results of Science, and remembering, moreover, the black record of crimes done in its name, regard it as of no benefit to mankind at all, but as a drawback rather, or even a curse—a break on the wheel of progress, an illusion of fanaticism or despair. So that while one set of persons regard it as of supreme importance, and another of no importance, or less than none, the way is open for anyone who shall estimate scientifically what, under each and all its forms, it can and does accomplish for man, and what, under no form whatever, it is capable of accomplishing. To break ground on a subject so interesting and important is the object of the present endeavour.

But, before the subject can be placed in all its bearings before the reader, it is necessary to clear the way by removing a few of the more prominent misconceptions that complicate or obscure it.

In the first place, then, I would remark that Religion, being the belief men have in the great Cause of things and their relation to that Cause, there is no hope of the laws on which it turns being scientifically determined, unless we are prepared to admit at the outset that, in whatever creed it may chance to be embodied, it is believed in precisely the same sense in which any other natural or human fact is believed. By this I mean, that it is accepted as a *reasonable* explanation of the phenomena

of the World and of Human Life, in the same sense in which the attraction of the moon is accepted as a reasonable explanation of the tides, or the attraction of the earth, of the fall of a leaf or stone. When it harmonizes completely with men's other beliefs, it is said to be a reasoned belief; when it does not so harmonize, and yet does not in its essence run counter to them, but is accepted, as is most frequently the case, on tradition or authority, it is still an intellectual belief, and is as much dependent on intellectual laws, as our belief in the Copernican theory of Astronomy (although we may not have followed in detail its various steps) is an intellectual belief dependent on intellectual laws. That this is the case, a moment's reflection should suffice to satisfy us. Why, for example, do we reject the religions of savages and the lower races? Evidently because they run counter to our knowledge of the world and of the human mind, that is to say, because they are not *intellectually* credible to us. Why do the savages themselves believe in them? Evidently because they do not run counter to their knowledge and culture, such as it is, that is to say, because they are intellectually credible to them. Again, why do so many of the cultured and enlightened classes in Europe at the present time reject the Christian religion? The answer, as before, is that the various conceptions embodied in its creed run counter to beliefs founded on positive Science, and so can no longer be credited as they were before Science had reached its present stage of advancement. Indeed, so obvious is it to me that religious beliefs are accepted or rejected on precisely the same *intellectual* grounds as any other beliefs whatsoever, that I should have deemed it superfluous to insist on it so strongly, were it not that I am aware how profoundly the idea is discredited. Instead of being regarded as a matter of intellectual belief, of logical inference, Religion is regarded as a matter of faith, a mystery passing comprehension; an affair of sentiment and emotion, rather than of insight; a state of the heart, rather than of the head. Now, the preva-

lence of this view of Religion is due largely to the converging teaching of two great and representative bodies of men, viz., the Priesthood and the men of Physical Science. The reasons for this convergence between men not usually found in the same camp, besides being interesting in themselves, will serve to throw light on the problem before us, and so merit the passing attention of the reader.

At one time, the Priesthood taught that Religion consisted in the acceptance of a certain set of dogmas, bound together by a kind of logical interdependency into what was known as the 'scheme of salvation,' which scheme was to be accepted on pain of eternal damnation, as salvation was to be found within its narrow limits alone. But of late years the clergy have become more and more conscious that many of these dogmas run counter to the verified conclusions of Science, and more and more afraid that, if each portion of their creed were to be dropped the moment it was found to be inconsistent with positive knowledge, the whole body of revealed religion would in a very short time disappear altogether. The consequence was, that while abandoning all those portions that could no longer be safely retained, they were all the more resolved that what remained should be put out of the reach of future assault. To secure this object, they were obliged to shift their former ground and take up an entirely different position. Instead of making dogma paramount as formerly, they proclaimed with ever-increasing emphasis that the essence of Religion lay in conduct and life, in the attitude of the heart and emotions, and not in any set of intellectual dogmas whatever; and, moreover, that it was not a *scientific knowledge* or *intellectual belief* at all, but was entirely a matter of *faith*; a thing not to be argued about or proven, but to be accepted in trust and lowly obedience. And, hence, if you speak of Religion to a moderate believer, he will ask you what is the use of your mere intellectual assent to a certain set of dogmas, if they have no influence on your life and action, your morals and behaviour; and if you speak to a

‘revivalist,’ he will tell you that even these moralities of his more moderate brother are but filthy rags, if his heart is cold, and if he has not experienced that complete change of heart, or ‘conversion,’ as it is called, which befell St Paul on the road to Damascus. But, however much these two may differ as to the amount of feeling and emotion necessary, they both agree that Religion lies in conduct or sentiment, and not in intellectual belief, and yet that they do not themselves really believe that Religion lies in conduct or emotion, may be seen in the attitude they assume towards those signal instances of virtue, devotion, and self-sacrifice which are found in the history of other creeds. Ask them whether the morality, the devotion, the self sacrifice of the Hindoo or Mahomedan devotee is real religion, and they will tell you that it may be superstition, fanaticism, or idolatry, but not real religion. Agree with the exemplary Christian that Religion is a matter of conduct and morality, and yet hint that you do not accept the Thirty nine Articles, or the logical scheme of the Fall, Atonement, and Redemption, you will soon be made aware that the root of the matter is not in you. Agree with the more ardent Revivalist that Religion is a change of heart, a ‘conversion,’ and yet confess that the belief in Christ is not necessary to you, you are still without the fold. And so, whether you take the cool and moderate believer, or the hot and intemperate one, both alike shall confess, when pressed that the essence of Religion lies in the assent given to a certain logical scheme of doctrine known as the scheme of salvation, and not in the mere rectitude of your conduct, or the mere attitude of the heart and emotions. Why, then, it will be asked, are conduct, sentiment, or emotion put forward as the essence of Religion? The reason, in a word, is because they are believed to be respectively the best *tests* whereby men shall know that we have a true belief in the doctrines we profess, and are not giving them a mere lip-assent just as a man best shows his sympathy with a principle by the extent to which he is willing to sacrifice himself for it, or his

belief in a cause, by the power it has to rouse his emotions and reach his heart.

If, then, Religion consists not in morality and conduct, emotion and sentiment—for no one denies that the Mahommedans, Jews, Hindoos, and other ‘heathens’ to whom we send our missionaries, possess these—but in the acceptance of a certain logical concatenation of fact and dogma, known as the ‘scheme of salvation,’ we are now in a position to examine the second great idea with which the clergy have indoctrinated the general mind. viz., that this scheme of salvation is a mystery passing comprehension, and that, therefore, our assent to it is not an *intellectual assent* depending on intellectual laws, but is a matter of *faith* alone. Now, the wide prevalence of this opinion would of itself prove that there is somewhere about it a general truth which gives it its plausibility and disposes men to accept it. If we search for this truth, we shall find it in the feeling of which we are all conscious—that there must be some truths which, being the basis of all proof, cannot themselves be proven, but must be taken for granted. In a former chapter we saw what these truths were, and instanced, among others, our belief in the existence of the external world, in the necessary connexion of phenomena by causation, and in the persistence of Force. Now, the peculiarity which we found distinguished these truths from all others was this—that one or other of them was involved in every judgment, every proof, every inference; indeed, without assuming one or more of them, thought could not go on at all. The inference, obviously, is that, while these few fundamental truths, these foundation rocks of thought, are accepted by faith alone, all other propositions whatsoever will be believed in proportion to the *evidence* by which they are supported. And hence, if we wish to determine whether the Christian or any other scheme of salvation is accepted by faith alone or not, we have simply to ask whether it is among the number of those truths without which thought cannot go on, whether it is a datum of consciousness, involved in every judgment, every

proof, every inference. The question, indeed, thus put requires no answer, for to imagine that the thousand and one dogmas which make up the Christian and other religions of the world, are all *intuitive beliefs* for which no reason is to be asked or given, were a weakness, even meanness, of intellect not to be entertained. Not that I charge the exponents of these religions with taking this attitude, on the contrary, you will have observed, that the very clergymen who teach that Religion is a matter of faith, have not faith enough in their scheme to leave it without comment, trusting that, being a matter of faith, it can require no proof. On the contrary, they have filled the libraries of the world with their bulky tomes, written to prove that their particular scheme has its analogies, in the phenomena of Nature, and is in harmony with the laws of the world and of human life. And what is this but asking you to accept it not by faith but because it is *intellectually* credible? It is true, they somewhat invert the natural order of evidence, and instead of first proving their point, and then asking you to accept it, they demand that you shall, first of all accept it, and then they will be prepared to prove it afterwards. This, however, is only a matter of form. Meanwhile, they are willing to admit that they could not have guessed the truths they inculcate had they not been revealed, but, being revealed, they are prepared to show that nothing could have greater probability. If you still object that these mysteries run counter to the known laws of Nature, they will proceed to show you that nothing could be more natural than that things so unnatural should occur, nothing more reasonable than that things apparently so unreasonable should be true, nothing more knowable than that things apparently so unknowable should be revealed. In a word, they are prepared to maintain that no belief could be more reasonable than the belief in religion. And thus we see that Religion is with them not a matter of faith, but of intellectual belief. Were it otherwise, indeed—were Religion to be accepted by faith alone—there would be no reason why we

should prefer Christianity to Mahommedanism, Buddhism, or the other religions of the world. On the contrary, we should be logically bound to stand for ever in suspense, were it not that our choice is at last determined by such intellectual considerations as the success Christianity has achieved among the highest races, its greater power to satisfy all the wants of man's nature, its greater harmony with the higher intuitions of the mind, and the like. This choice of Christianity from among a number of religions, on account of the higher probabilities in its favour, proves that among the best class of minds it is a matter of intelligent belief, and not of blind faith. If we turn to the simple-minded, who have heard nothing of the wire-drawings of Theologians, and know nothing of the 'Christian Evidences,' we shall find that they, too, accept religion not from faith, but from what to them are intellectual reasons. Some there are who having tasted it, as they would wine, and found it comforting, straightway believe in its truth. This effect on their feelings is the reason, they believe it to be true, and who shall say that, in their stage of culture, it is not as good a reason as they are likely to find? Others, again, and these perhaps are the majority, accept it from the first without question, in the form in which tradition and authority have bequeathed it to them. And, although nothing, to our nineteenth-century intelligence, looks more like accepting a thing from blind faith, than believing it merely because it is revealed, a little consideration will show that this is a mistake. For, as we saw in our last chapter, it is a law of our intellectual nature—a law of belief—that facts which cannot be accounted for by natural laws, must be attributed to the agency of wills like our own, that is to say, to the interference of some deity. What more natural, then, that in the confused currents of a world where little can be understood, minds not yet possessed with the scientific sense of the universality of law should await the interposition of Providence, in the shape of a revelation, to teach them how to order their lives? And what more natural

for them to believe than that that revelation should be the true one which has been accepted not only by all those they know and love, but by so many generations, that have gone before them? And thus it is that whether a religion is believed from a reasoned comparison of the probabilities in its favour over those of other creeds, or from personal experiences of its comforting effects, or from *Revelation pure and simple*, it is in each instance an intellectual belief, depending on intellectual laws, and not on mere faith.

If we turn, now, from the Priesthood to the Men of Science, we shall find that they, too, regard Religion, not as a matter of intellectual belief, but of faith; not of knowledge, but of emotion. As instance of this, take the following typical passage from Professor Tyndall. Speaking of creeds, he says: 'It may be well to recognize them as forms of a force, mischievous if permitted to intrude on the region of knowledge, over which it holds no command, but capable of being guided to noble issues in the region of emotion, which is its proper sphere.'

Now, the considerations which have given rise to this idea of Religion, although superficial and plausible, rather than solid and substantial, nevertheless demand the earnest attention of the reader. In the first place, then, when we contemplate the infinite shades and gradations of religious opinion, the endless and petty distinctions of sect, and dogma, and creed, all of which are as resolutely upheld as if they were the very pillars of the faith, we are incapable of conceiving on what real intellectual laws such frivolous or absurd distinctions can depend. We ask ourselves what new law of the world or of human life, for example, could possibly have given rise to the new and peculiar vagaries of Mormonism or Shakerism, and have necessitated their being differentiated as new oracles of truth? What genuine natural analogy can lie at the root of the doctrine of transubstantiation? What natural and inherent reason can give a sacred efficacy to sprinkling that is denied to plunging,

or to plunging that is denied to sprinkling? And if it is impossible to discover any reason in the nature of things, what can we think but that Religion is a matter of revelation or faith but not of intellectual belief? Now, although to the scientific mind, which demands for each distinction a genuine thought, this conclusion may seem natural and reasonable, a little consideration will show that it is unfounded. For it is necessary to observe that, however fantastic or absurd much that is bound up in religious creeds may seem to be, the basis and groundwork of the creed will be found to rest on as rigid a backbone of intellectual *law* as any other beliefs whatsoever. Indeed, it is not until this basis and groundwork of a creed is found to be *intellectually* credible, that the superficial and fantastic fringework of it will be accepted. Not that a creed is swallowed as a whole because there is sufficient of what is wholesome and palatable in it to carry off what is nauseous or absurd; nor because it is so presented that the offensive or ridiculous is minimized or concealed; nor yet, again, because the mind, like the body, will only appropriate what is nourishing, rejecting all that is noxious or superfluous; but really because the basis and groundwork having once been accepted from conviction and on intellectual grounds, the excrescences, superficial and fantastic accompaniments will be found, strange to say, not inconsistent with that basis and groundwork.

Let me illustrate this. We have already seen that it is a law of the human mind, that when phenomena cannot be accounted for by natural laws, they are attributed to the agency of wills like our own. The great phenomena of the world lie quite beyond man's control, and complete their cycle of changes quite independently of his will. They must, therefore, be referred to the agency of some superhuman will or Deity. If, then, the Deity holds the world and all its movements as reins in his hands, what more natural than that he should control them as he pleases? And hence it is that interference with the laws and movements of the world—or miracles—instead of

being regarded with wonder and surprise, as if they were portents, are, in early stages of thought, the most *natural* things in the world. They are looked for and expected, and when they occur are as credible as any other event. And, of course, if miracles in general are believable, any particular miracle is believable. If there is a mystic efficacy in the laying on of hands, why not in dipping, or sprinkling, or plunging? If there is a Divine Presence in the sanctuary, why not in the bread and wine also? If, in one age and among one people, Christ was honoured by being made the mouthpiece of Heaven, why not Mahomet in another age and among other people? And if Mahomet, why not Joe Smith or Joanna Southcote? If the Apostles were inspired and endowed with the power of working miracles, why should not the Catholic Church in council be so also? And if the Church in council, why not the Pope himself when speaking *ex cathedra*? The truth is, once believe that the interposition of the Deity is necessary for the right ordering of human affairs, and that in different ages he makes different men the bearers of his messages to men, there will be no limits to the number of aspirants to the honour of being the exponents of the Divine Will, but the difficulty of finding believers who are sufficiently disengaged from the old beliefs to be open to a new revelation. In India, indeed, where, from want of scientific knowledge, so many things are unaccountable, and where the people are always open for the reception of a new divinity to explain them, the manufacture of deities may be seen openly going on at this hour. Any person of exceptional powers or unusual sanctity, any object with peculiar and unaccountable properties, any peculiar tree, or stone even, gradually becomes sacred, is worshipped, and finally erected into a deity. And thus it is, that so long as men are in that stage of thought where they believe that the direct interposition of the Deity is necessary to account for phenomena, there is no religion, however fantastic or absurd, that is *logically* inconsistent with that belief. If we are asked how it is then, that the

more absurd anomalies and superstitions of the old belief could never again be revived, except, perhaps, among the most ignorant portion of the population, our answer is, that there is a law by which errors decay and are forgotten, just as there is a law by which truths grow and spread abroad; and, in the progress of scientific discovery, certain facts and truths become so patent and verifiable, so bold and menacing, that the old superstitions which run counter to them shrink abashed from their presence, until, at last, they are seen no more, and so de cease; such only as the great mass of the people have not seen openly confronted and put to shame, lingering on in the market-place and at the street-corner, with the secret connivance of the Priesthood, until men of thought and culture have to turn their heads aside as they pass.

The assumption, then, of the Men of Science that Religion is a matter of faith, and not of intellectual deduction, turns out to be without foundation. Indeed, it is high time that the *coup de grace* should, once for all, be given to the baseless distinction sought to be imposed by Theology in its decadence, and Science in its pride, between faith and ordinary belief—the hallucination that Religion, or anything else, is or can be accepted by faith alone. For there is no old woman so hopelessly stupid and credulous, but has good grounds, so far as her knowledge and culture extend, for the faith she has in the person or thing in whom she chooses to repose confidence. What to you looks like blind faith, is not so to her, but, if well probed, will be found to depend on some reason which to her own mind is solid and sufficient—the fact, perhaps, that you keep your carriage and live in a certain street, your reputation or success, your rank and title—all of which, in the absence of special knowledge, are weighty points, and as good intellectual reasons as in her stage of culture you could expect or, for some time yet, hope to find.

But the Scientists, if dislodged from their first position, viz., that Religion is a matter of *faith*, fall back on their second

viz., that it is a matter of *emotion*. And although this view, like the last, is erroneous, like it, too, it has a superficial plausibility. For it is notorious that religious beliefs can be aroused by stimulating the emotions, and that they die away when the emotions turn cold, or the stimulus is withdrawn. You have only, during a period of religious excitement, to gather a few score of men and women together into a place of worship, to start one or two of the more fervid and devout praying, when presently you shall see the whole mass begin to heave and groan, the strong hearts begin to melt, the wicked, stricken to the earth by the sense of sin, to tremble and cry for mercy, until at last the cheerful tidings of salvation, whispered into their willing ears, lifts the load of guilt from their hearts, opens up on their darkened souls a morning horizon from which the clouds of doubt and despair have rolled away, and so, in the quiet assurance that they have found the truth, they rest in peace. On witnessing an exhibition of this kind, what can you say but, with Professor Tyndall that Religion is an emotion? And yet there is a fallacy in this conclusion, which a little consideration will make manifest. For although it is true that religious beliefs can be aroused by stimulating the emotions, it does not therefore follow that Religion is an emotion, and not an intellectual belief, dependent on intellectual laws. The part played by the emotions in Religion is like the part played in the convictions of a jury by the rhetoric of a brilliant counsel. Like him, they present certain portions of the evidence in strong colours, and withdraw other portions into the shade; they assume as true, and proceed to argue on, the very thing which is still hypothesis and remains to be proven. But, although coloured by the emotions, religious beliefs are not less intellectual beliefs (true or false, it matters not) than the convictions of a jury, although coloured by counsel, are intellectual convictions. It is the same with all our natural beliefs. It is a law of the mind that our intellectual convictions are modified by the temporary or permanent state of our emotions; the office

of Philosophy being to neutralize these distorting influences; Science even, in its observations, having to allow for the constitution of our senses and the disturbances due to individual idiosyncracies. Is a man's political belief, for example, not an intellectual conviction, because perchance the premises from which it is drawn may be dyed by self-interest, association, prestige, tradition, and the like? Is Toryism or Radicalism a mere emotion, because much of pride, envy, or self-interest enter into the reasons which commend it to the mind? Is a lover's opinion of his beloved less real, because it may be a brow of Egypt on which he thinks he sees Helen's beauty: or of his mistress, because to his jealous imagination trifles light as air are confirmations strong as books of Holy Writ? Is the belief of the consumptive in the latest nostrum less genuine, because his buoyant nature weaves solid convictions out of the sunbeams of hope? or the despair of the melancholic, because over the brightest prospect his gloomy nature casts a pall? Fear, too, exercises the same influence on our intellectual beliefs; and there is not an old woman who believes in supernatural beings in general, but could, I am convinced, be goaded by fear into as genuine a belief in witchcraft and other extinct superstitions as was prevalent in the Middle Ages. Emotion, too, influences our own opinions of our own conduct. Leave us to ourselves, and we will cheerfully recognize our shortcomings, and the silent reaction of the mind will prompt us, perhaps, to make reparation; but persecute, sting, and insult us, and you thereby so emphasize the considerations that make for our own justification, and so intensify our feeling of our own injuries, that you leave us with precisely the opposite convictions with which we started. John Stuart Mill, with fine prescience, foretold that the war between the North and South in America, which began as a war of *interest*, would, if sufficiently prolonged, and the passions on either side were thoroughly roused, end in a war of *principle*; and such, indeed, was the case. Now, it is

precisely the same with Religion. A friend of mine, who had been carried away by the tide of Revivalism that swept over my native town in my early days, confessed to me at the time, when pressed, that the somewhat thin and unsubstantial credence he had formerly given to the Christian religion, was, by the fierce religious excitement which prevailed around him, quickened into a burning conviction, without a single new fact, new argument, new reason, being added to the previously-existing stock of evidence in his mind. The truth was, that the intense play of hope and fear, the alternate tension and relaxation of feeling as the different aspects of the Christian scheme were passed before his imagination, so affected the evidence placed before him, that what was in itself mere hypothesis was taken as burning fact, what was mere hope as if it were solid reality, what was wished for as if it were realised; just as children, through the fear or fascination of ghost stories, turn imaginative into real objects; or men in a panic take for granted the things of all others most important to be proved. And thus it is that religious beliefs are no exceptions to our ordinary beliefs, but, like them, are affected by emotion, and yet, like them, are, as we have seen, genuine intellectual beliefs. Like them, too, their vagaries, absurdities, and insanities are kept in check by mutual antagonism, and by the number of disinterested persons whose emotions in the matter are neutral, or respond only to normal stimuli—men who judicially examine the evidence without losing their heads through hope or fear, and who, by insulating each absurdity with a ring of damped and unprejudiced thought, keep in abeyance the devouring fires of fanaticism.

And now, having brushed aside the popular misconception sprung from the convergence of the Priesthood and the Men of Science, viz., that Religion is a matter of faith, emotion, or sentiment, and not of intellectual belief, we are in a position to enter on a consideration of the *laws* on which all religions have been constructed, and along the lines of which they have been evolved.

CHAPTER II.

THE LAW OF REFLEXION.

AT the outset of this chapter I may remark, that although Religion depends on the same laws of evidence as our ordinary beliefs, it nevertheless differs from these beliefs in having as its subject-matter the *Cause* or causes of the phenomena of the world, and not the *phenomena* themselves. It is necessary, therefore, to make special and separate enquiry into the laws of the mind on which it is constructed; as when these are once discovered, we shall the more readily perceive its *effects* on that great end of all civilization—the elevation and expansion of the individual mind. If then, we consider Religion in general, *i.e.*, those cardinal features common to all religions, we shall find that the laws on which it is constructed may all be included under two great principles:—

1. That by the nature of our intelligence, we are bound to represent the Cause of things in terms of ourselves, *i.e.*, of our knowledge and culture, our social and moral ideals, and habits of thought.
2. That the Human Mind, like the World, is a balance of polar forces, and must get itself harmonised on penalty of disruption.

A glance over the history of the world will discover to us that religions differ from each other in three great and important aspects; in the *number* of the gods, as seen in the passage of religions through the successive stages of Animism, Fetichism, Polytheism, and Monotheism; in the *character* of the gods, as seen in the gradual change from the bloody and revengeful gods of the savage, to the gods of Greek and Roman Polytheism, with their mingled virtues and vices, onwards to the Christian Deity, infinite in power, holiness, goodness, and

truth; and lastly in the *relation* in which men stand to their gods, as seen in the different 'schemes of salvation' abroad in the world, with their variety of duties, rites, and ceremonies, their rewards and punishments, present and prospective. Now it is the first and second of these great cardinal features of all religions, viz, the *number* and *character* of the gods, that depend upon the first law above enunciated—the law, viz, that men must construct their idea of the Cause of things in terms of their existing knowledge, culture, and habit of thought.

In an earlier chapter I have already shown that the *number* of the gods—as seen in the passage of religions through the Fetichistic, Polytheistic, and Monotheistic stages of thought—depends on the law that, when the *natural causes* of phenomena are unknown, events are attributed to the agency of *wills* like our own, and, consequently, that, as these phenomena become more and more reduced under the dominion of natural forces, fewer and fewer deities are necessary to account for them. And as this law is merely the *intellectual side* of the more general law—that we must represent the Cause of things in terms of ourselves—I shall not dwell on it any further here, but shall pass on to show that the *character* of the gods is the product and reflection of men's knowledge, culture, and habits of thought.

If in imagination, we picture the world as it lay around the primitive savage—a vast chaos of unknown powers and forces, in the midst of which he stood as a poor unprotected atom—it is evident that he must have regarded these powers as good or evil, according as they afforded him pleasure by ministering to his comforts and supplying his wants, or gave him pain by endangering his life and destroying his means of subsistence. And, assuming, what we know must have been the case, that he had little or no knowledge of the nature or laws of these phenomena, and that, in consequence, he was bound to refer them to the agency of *wills* like his own, what more natural and inevitable than that he should

tempest and lightning that scathed him, the floods, earthquakes, and volcanoes that overwhelmed him, and the relentless sea that devoured him, as under the immediate control of evil and malicious deities: while the genial sun that warmed and comforted him, the earth that clothed and fed him, the fountain that cooled and refreshed him, should be presided over by friendly and beneficent powers? But, as knowledge advanced, and these phenomena were found to be due to the action of natural forces dependent on natural laws, not only did those deities that formerly exercised control over the various powers of Nature die away, as was seen at the break-up of Paganism, but the pressure of man's wants, which first urged him to investigate the properties of natural objects, urged him still further to apply the knowledge so gained to the arts of life, and thereby enabled him, in time, to control the hostile elements, and to convert what were formerly the instruments of evil to himself into the instruments of good. Not only did he make defences for himself against each of those powers of Nature that were hostile to him—as houses to shield him from the tempest, dykes from the floods, and ships from the raging waters—but, by the knowledge he had gained of the natures of things, he was enabled to turn these powers to his good. He made use of the earth to grow him corn, of the sea to transport it, of wind and water to grind it, and of fire to cook it. With the hostile powers of Nature thus tamed and subdued to his will, and devoted to his use and benefit, it was henceforth impossible for him to believe that they were either evil in themselves, or presided over by evil deities. The result was, that with no need of deities to explain what natural laws were sufficient to account for, and with no reason for believing those powers to be evil which he had made the ministers of good, nothing was left but for the old systems of Paganism to pass away, and a new religion to arise, in which the powers of Nature should be represented as all working together for the good of man, and which should have for object of worship One God—

the parent of all good, the provider of all natural bounties, the Devil alone being still retained as necessary to account for those evils which have resulted from human nature itself, and which the civilization and culture of centuries have not yet been able to eliminate. The old systems of Paganism seem absurd to us now, and yet how natural it was for the savage to believe that those elements which harmed him, and which he was unable to control, were the workings of malicious powers, may be realised by ourselves whenever we lose control over the forces of Nature, and find ourselves for the time being at their mercy. As we ride in safety, for example, over the bosom of the deep, how patronizingly we regard it as a mere bull of water, but let an accident precipitate us into the devouring element, unable to swim, and some of my readers may remember with what terrible vividness they then realised for the first time, that it was a living demon, relentless and implacable.

In so far, then, as the gods of the various religions were *personifications*, as it were, of the powers of Nature, their characters corresponded to the civilization and stage of thought of the people by whom they were worshipped. But there are other objects of human thought besides the phenomena of Nature, there is also the nature of Man, and the changes through which he has passed in knowledge, culture, and modes of life. And if, in the early religions, some deities were personifications of the powers of Nature, others, again, reflected the mental and moral lineaments of the people themselves. The former, as representing the larger and more general operations of Nature, became the greater gods—the *Dii majores*—and among many savage tribes are so still, the latter as representing the special concerns of human beings, became the lesser gods—the gods of the tribe, the *lares* and *penates*, and the like. But it was not long before the operations of the great powers of Nature were found to be due to natural forces which obeyed natural laws. The result was, that the *Dii majores* of Paganism disappeared, and one of the tribal gods, as the Jehovah of the

Jews, was elevated to the supreme direction of the world of Nature, as well as of Man. And, further, while the Nature-gods, who were the reflection of forces that were good or evil in general, were represented as endowed with the moral qualities of good or evil in general; the tribal-gods, who were the reflections of human life, were endowed, not merely with the general moral qualities of good or evil, but with the *special* forms this good or evil assumed among the tribes and peoples themselves. In that worship of ancestral spirits, for example, which is not only the most primitive form of existing religion, but is, perhaps, the earliest form of all religion, the gods are in every way the express image of the chiefs of the tribe, not only morally, but physically also. Being the spirits of these departed chiefs, they have not only the same occupations and tastes, inclinations and aversions, as the living chiefs, but are propitiated by the same offerings—offerings, too, of the most gross and material kind, as food to eat, scalps and trophies taken from conquered tribes, weapons with which to fight the enemy in the land of spirits. In every respect they have the same bloody and revengeful natures as the people themselves by whom they are worshipped; their rewards and punishments are of the same character, and are distributed in the same way, and for the same kinds of conduct and action. In this stage of culture, it may be remarked, there is every probability that the Nature-gods as some have supposed, were figured in the popular imagination as the spirits of departed chiefs, friendly or hostile. As Civilization and Knowledge continued to advance, and the gods of the tribe became farther removed in time and distance, they cease to be quite palpable and material, and become more grey and indistinct in outline, dwelling far away in dim remoteness; nevertheless, they still continue to reflect the virtues and vices of the great mass of the people who own their sway. In the *Iliad*, the gods have precisely the same qualities, idealised and expanded, as the Greek and Trojan heroes; the same physical strength, intellect, courage, passion, cunning, and revenge; and,

moreover, the speeches put into their mouths are precisely the same as those of the heroes, both in tone and point of view. The Jehovah of the early Jewish history is only a higher development of the old tribal-god; and is represented as possessing just such qualities, idealised, as we can imagine in the chief of a tribe in the same stage of culture. He is represented as more or less in the form of a man, and, although exacting, as having great regard for his own people; but as jealous of other gods, cruel and revengeful towards other tribes. As time rolls on, and the small tribes of the world become gradually welded by conquest into large and highly-organised kingdoms, warfare loses its personal, bloody, and internecine character, and becomes impersonal, legalized, and softened under civilized forms; in Carlyle's words, "it ceases to be Choctaw, and becomes a Chivalry." The gods of the nations, accordingly, although still remaining military, lose their bloody and remorseless characters; Jehovah still remains the 'God of Battles,' but ceases to be a god of cruelty and revenge. And, now that civilization has reached a point where men's moral ideas have advanced from admiration of personal prowess and courage, to admiration of moral and intellectual courage; where humane ideas everywhere prevail; and where peaceful industry has become the idol of the nations; one rarely hears of the God of Battles; except, perhaps, when some archbishop of the Church inaugurates a campaign with prayers to Him for the success of our arms, or returns thanks at its close for its successful issue.

We must not, of course, expect to find the real causal connection between men's culture and the number and character of the gods they worship, as close and intimate *historically* as is here represented; as there are many minor considerations which interfere with it and which must be allowed for. Among others, for example, is the fact that no Society is homogeneous throughout; but, on the contrary, the cultivated classes are usually some centuries ahead of the great body of the people living in the same community at the same time. Hence it was

that the Polytheism of Paganism long survived the time when it was natural that the thunder should be believed to be the voice of Jove, and the lightning his bolt; and went living on, with augurs winking at it, until the knowledge necessary to damn it had descended to the masses of the people, and another religion had arisen, more in conformity with the culture, aspiration, and yearnings of the time. But if Religion sometimes lags behind the culture of the period, at other times, again, it bounds before it. The Monotheism of the Jews was in advance of the intellectual culture which ultimately would have necessitated it; and was due, no doubt, to tribal antagonism, to peculiarities of the Jewish mind, and to peculiarities in their situation and circumstances; but still the *character* of Jehovah sufficiently reflected the progress of Jewish culture. Previous to the coming of Christ, among the many and sublime virtues with which Jehovah was endowed were mingled some human weaknesses, but when Christ appeared and announced himself as being one with the Father, and when the influence of his beautiful life and teachings began to permeate society, the effect was to throw into the background the old idea of Jehovah, and to give prominence in the new conception to those beautiful characteristics so marked in Christ himself. And then it was that, with that tendency so inherent in men to give roundness and completeness to what they regard with love and admiration, the doctors of the Church ascribed an *infinite* perfection to all those attributes of the Father which were so prominent in the Son—mercy, justice, goodness, and truth. But, just as Paganism, before it, paid the penalty of living too long, by dying without hope of resurrection; so Christianity has paid the penalty of giving a greater sweep in its representation of the attributes of the Deity than a just insight into Nature will warrant. So long as theological habits of thought prevailed, and men were able to give full scope to their *feelings* by accommodating their idea of the Deity to the desires of their minds, all was well. But when Science, with its accurate perceptions,

had advanced to a point where its results were no longer to be gainsaid, Christianity began to crack, and finally fell to pieces, from the incompatibility of its philosophical basis—its six days' creation, fall of man, resurrection, ascension, and other miracles—with a scientific knowledge of the laws of the world and of human life. And, as the old conception of Jehovah had already been discarded, from its incompatibility with those humane ideas which were begotten of civilization and culture, the later Christian conception of the Deity was left standing face to face with the teachings of Nature; and then it was seen that a just insight into the constitution of the World would not justify men in endowing the Deity with those *infinite* attributes of power and goodness which the Christian Religion had ascribed to him. Men pointed to the cruelty, the misery, the pain, which are not only the lot of poor humanity, but are apparently woven into the very texture and order of Nature—races of animals preying on race, tribes of men on tribes, injustice, oppression, and misery everywhere—and asked whether these things were compatible with a Deity who was represented as literally *infinite* in power, mercy, goodness, and truth; and, as no satisfactory reply was forthcoming, they were bound to reject the Christian Deity altogether. And as, from old association, they were unable to conceive of any other God but the God represented in Christianity; and as they had never dreamt of a Theism in which God should be endowed with attributes and powers less than infinite; they did not stop at the conception of a great Cause which should *adequately* reflect the genius and constitution of the World, but rushed on down to Materialism and Atheism. Such is the effect of claiming for the Deity more than our knowledge of Nature and of the human mind will justify. And, indeed, we may confidently predict that, until men perceive that the idea of an *absolutely infinite* God is a metaphysical illusion, a fond imagination of early thought rounding off its conceptions to suit the desires of the mind; until they perceive that the evil propensities of men,

CHAPTER III.

THE LAW OF THE BALANCES.

HAVING seen in the last chapter that the first two cardinal aspects of all religions—the *number* and *character* of the deities men worship—depend on the first law there enunciated, viz, that we are bound by the constitution of our minds to construct the Cause of things in terms of ourselves, we come now to the third great aspect of religions—the *relation* in which men stand to their deities—and shall endeavour to show that this depends on the second law enunciated, viz, *that the mind is a harmonious structure and must balance itself on penalty of disruption*. Now, it is necessary to remark that this is not an isolated law, or one peculiar to the mind, but is merely one aspect of a law that runs through all existence—the law of Polarity, or of the Balances, as I have elsewhere called it—the simplest and most comprehensive statement, as it seems to me, of the plan on which the Universe is constructed. This law is not, as might be imagined, a mere corollary of the law of Evolution, on the contrary, the law of Evolution is a corollary of it. Spencer admits that the law of Evolution is a direct *deduction* from the fact that the atoms of which the matter of the Universe is composed exist in the polar forms of attraction and repulsion. It is, therefore, a deduction from the law of the Balances, and not the law of the Balances a deduction from it. The law of Evolution is best exemplified in the concrete things of which the Universe is made up—the Solar System is a whole, the physical structure of the earth is a whole, mankind as a whole, man himself and other animals as wholes, the law of the Balances, on the contrary, is best seen in each and every part of these concrete things—in the centri-

fugal and centripetal motions of the planets; in action and reaction in physics; in the ebb and flow of tides; in supply and demand in trade; reform and conservatism in politics; sleep and wake, inspiration and expiration, systole and diastole in organic life; generalization and individualization in thought; integration and differentiation in matter, and the like. The law of Evolution, with inexorable rigour, deduces, not only the movements of the stars and the structure of animals, but the noblest exercise of the reason and the highest intuitions of the soul, from the *material* fact that Matter is *limited* in quantity and exists in the antagonistic forms of attraction and repulsion, and thereby incurs the charge of Materialism; the law of the Balances limits itself to stating the fact that the world is a series of balances on an *ascending* scale, but does not assume that the *high* attributes of the mind are but modes of the *low* attributes of matter and motion, and so escapes that charge. The law of Evolution, while representing Nature as evolving from lower to higher organisms along a spiral line in which there is no breach of continuity at any point, is obliged at last to admit that the gulf between matter and mind cannot be bridged, and so stultifies its own pretensions to being a complete interpretation; the law of the Balances, on the contrary, represents Nature as constructed on an *identical plan* throughout, its phenomena lying above one another in successive hierarchies, but does not pretend to bridge the unbridgeable, or explain the inexplicable. The law of Evolution, in representing the highest attributes of the mind as modes only of the attributes of matter, makes mind and matter in essence the same, and so runs counter to the intuitions of mankind; the law of the Balances represents them as different in essence, and so preserves that hierarchy of nature and attribute among things, which is in harmony with our natural intuitions, and on which all our organized intelligence rests.

Now, it is in the action of the Mind that this Law of the Balances plays so conspicuous and important a part. Our

desires, imaginations, and aspirations, stretch out to infinitude; but the extent to which it is probable that we shall be able to gratify them in this life is limited by the finite nature of the world, and by the circumstances in which we are placed. We should all like to be emperors, kings, or other great potentates; but, on finding that these high arenas are practically closed to us, we cut down our ambitions to a point that is commensurate with our chances of success, to the point where there is a *balance* between our efforts and our hopes, our desires and their likelihood of attainment. Were it not so, the mind would become numbed and paralyzed by the constant endeavour to attain the unattainable, as our arms do by the constant endeavour to hold on to what is too large for their embrace. Or, say that we begin low down in the world, and, looking around see no chance of rising out of the position in which we were born; we restrict our ambition to the limited sphere in which success seems possible or probable. But suddenly we either discover unexpected powers in ourselves, or circumstances throw us out of our former sphere into a higher and wider arena; when out go the sand-bags that kept us down, and our ambition mounts like a balloon to the point where the inner world of aspiration and hope *balances* the outer world of circumstance and reality.

If our practical and worldly ambitions are thus obliged to adapt themselves to circumstances, and so to find their balance, the longing for the Ideal still remains, and is not to be put off, but is as importunate as ever. A balance, therefore, must somewhere be found for this longing; and if it cannot be found in the real world, it must be sought for in the ideal. Now, it is part of the constitution of the world that the high promise and ideal which our hearts foretell shall not spring up and blossom in a night, but shall be gradually unfolded from generation to generation, from age to age. And as the longing for the ideal is, and always has been, a part of human nature, it is evident that at no *given* point of time can this mundane

world yield that full gratification to all our aspirations, sentiments, and powers, which is so essential to their harmony and balanced activity. Consider, for example, how many ages must have come and gone, even after the world had been brought to feed and clothe us, before it could give us security for property and marriage-ties, courts of justice, and personal and political liberty. And, even now, how far have we still to go before we shall be able to dispense with the policeman; and before justice and goodness shall become natural, habitual, and instinctive? And hence it is evident that at no given point of time during this long incubation, can our aspirations, wants, and sentiments, find full gratification in the *real* world. An *ideal* world must, therefore, be provided for them—the world of Religion, of Poetry, and of Art. Of these three, Religion, giving satisfaction, as it does, to the great cardinal wants of human nature, is the most powerful and universal sentiment; and must, therefore, be our most serious and important concern. There are but comparatively few men, it must be admitted, whose love for high and æsthetic enjoyment is so keen and exorbitant that the loss of those special forms of beauty with which the great masters of art, music, and poetry, have endowed and enriched the world, would be felt to be an irreparable calamity. With the great mass of mankind, the lower, more carnal and material wants and ambitions fill up the efforts and struggles of a lifetime—money, power, position, luxury, fame, material prosperity, family aggrandisement. And yet, owing to the uncertainty of life, the capriciousness of fortune, and the limitations of circumstances, it is precisely in one or other of these aims, so dear to the heart, that all men are doomed to disappointment. They either lose their money, their health, or their children; their hopes of fortune, of position, of fame, are blighted; or, if nothing else, the fleeting and inexorable years are gliding on, old age is approaching, and death inevitable. Now, it is against these—the staple mortifications and humiliations of human life—that Religion is con-

structured or evolved as *balance* and compensation. Art and poetry, music and philosophy, are, it is true, excellent harbours to which those who love them can retire, and, for the time being, more or less successfully defy the lesser misfortunes and disappointments of life; but the great strokes of Fate, which destroy those cherished idolatries that lie most immediate to our hearts, can find balance and solace in Religion alone. When all earthly hopes are shattered, the mind must fall back for rest on that which lies *behind* the world of Time. And when Religion adds to its present or prospective Heaven the additional attractions of music and art, of moral and intellectual expansion, as it does in the higher religions, it is easy to understand, with such full organ-harmony of all our powers, aspirations, and ideals—sensuous, moral, and intellectual—how supreme is its importance to man. For just as, in the *social* world, political power takes precedence of all other power, because it affects more powerfully than any other those great standing interests of men—person, property, fortune, business, life and liberty—so, in the *ideal* world, Religion takes precedence, because, more than any other, it gives solace and comfort to the great standing trials and evils of human life. No system of Philosophy, however true or profound, can excite more than the most limited and merely intellectual interest, when compared with Religion; for no system can or does hold out those combined sensuous, moral, and imaginative attractions, which all religions are commissioned to dispense to their devotees. And, accordingly, you will find, to your surprise and disappointment perhaps, that persons who are most interested in what they call the ‘spiritual concerns’ of man, have often little or no interest in those great spiritual truths, the contemplation of which, of itself alone, gives elevation and expansion to the mind, but which do not, perhaps, specially call up those ‘comforting assurances’ in which religion has enveloped them; as misers care nothing for the great laws of commerce or political economy, but are enraptured with those

personal narratives of money-making which call up such pleasing images in their own breasts; or frivolous young women care nothing for those great laws of the mind on which the future of mankind depends, but will listen with thrilling interest to those personalities which, by their associations, enwrap them in an atmosphere so flattering to their own dearest hopes.

If Religion is thus thrown out as *balance* to the ills of life, we shall expect to find the different religions of the world so constructed as to provide for the special trials to which the men who live under them are exposed. Among savage races, for example, the greater part of the evils which befall men are believed to be due to the anger of offended deities; and these deities are believed to have the same bloody and revengeful character as the chiefs of the tribes. To live under the ever-present consciousness that such revengeful spirits are everywhere hovering around, would create a tension of mind that would become unendurable. Some balance, therefore, must be thrown out to relax this tension, and give rest to the mind. And what more natural than that it should be the belief that the gods are to be propitiated by the same gifts—weapons, food, trophies, and the like—as are found to appease the anger and secure the approbation of their chiefs? Accordingly these offerings and sacrifices become embodied in their religion, and form the most important of their religious duties. In the early centuries of the Christian era, too, when the Roman Empire had fallen to pieces, but before the Feudal System had arisen out of its ruins, the greater part of mankind remained still in slavery; Chivalry had not yet appeared; and Physical Force was everywhere triumphant. In the *real* world, there was no field for liberty, no arena for expansion of mind, no tribunal to which moral force could appeal. The consequence was, that men were bound to construct an *ideal* world where the wants of their nature should find gratification, and which should serve as balance to the hardships of their earthly lot.

Accordingly, to the compensations which the Church held out, were added a whole world of legends of saints and martyrs; and these legends soon became the most popular part of the prevailing religion. They were so constructed as precisely to meet the particular ills to which the people were subject; and turned, as was natural, on the blessings of liberty and the cruelties of slavery, on the beauty of moral rather than of physical force, on kindness, sympathy, and love. And now that civilization has at last reached the point where warfare has ceased to be the main concern of nations, and peaceful industry, with its money-making and other ambitions, has taken its place, human ills have not thereby disappeared, but they come to men in different shapes. Instead of living in fear of slavery, mutilation, arbitrary imprisonment, and violent death, men now live in fear of poverty, with its train of evils—loss of position, of power, of grandeur, of rank, authority, and respect—as well as those great strokes common to men in every age—loss of health, of family, and of friends. And, furthermore, owing to the capriciousness of fortune, or the peculiar way in which wealth is distributed, the honest and industrious are oft-times obliged to stand by and see their highest hopes blighted, and themselves sink in poverty and distress, while the wicked continue to flourish like green bay-trees. Were there no hope of rectification even here for a dislocated one of fortune, life would become intolerable, and would end, as it should, in its day of violence. But religion comes in and mends the evil of the case, supplies the balance and compensation required, and restores the mental harmony. Here, for example, is a poor old widow who has come to hard to bring up her family responsibly, for whose life has been a perpetual succession of sorrows and trials; in turn she has seen her husband, her children, and her friends, and whose life has been a perpetual succession of sorrows and trials; and who, in the end, has seen her husband, her children, and her friends, and whose life has been a perpetual succession of sorrows and trials. Here, for example, is a poor old widow who has come to hard to bring up her family responsibly, for whose life has been a perpetual succession of sorrows and trials; in turn she has seen her husband, her children, and her friends, and whose life has been a perpetual succession of sorrows and trials.

of Time shall be rectified, where not only the scorn of the rich and proud shall have no place, and all her troubles and trials shall cease, but where, also, her husband, friends, and little ones shall rejoin her, not to part again? But not this poor widow alone has need of consolation; all, alike, have their secret sorrows, for which they require the solace of Religion. And, indeed, it may be safely predicted that, so long as the great masses of men are in that stage of thought where the consolations of Religion are still credible, not the gods themselves can prevent them from constructing an ideal Heaven in the future, as *balance* and counterpoise to this present life—a Heaven in the contemplation of which their minds shall find peace, and harmony, and rest. But when once the stage of thought in which these beliefs took rise has passed away, or when, from various causes, they have become discredited (as on the Continent they largely are at the present time), and when, in consequence, all hopes of redress from that quarter is gone; the minds of men must still find a balance somewhere; but, instead of finding it in the blissful visions of another world, they will find it in schemes to improve or redress the present, as we see foreshadowed in such impracticable dreams as Nihilism or Anarchism—dreams woven by the imaginations of men who could find no redress in the present world, and had lost all belief in a future.

And, further, an examination of the religions of the world will show that they all have that *balanced* and harmonious structure which we should have been led to expect from our knowledge of the laws on which they are constructed. In none, you will observe, is hope entirely cut off; in all, there is a way of escape held out to the guilty. The offended deities of the savages are to be propitiated, as we have seen, by such gross and material offerings as food and drink, weapons, and clothing, the sacrifice of women, of enemies, and of slaves; the angry God of the mediæval Catholic, by self-inflicted stripes, fasts, pilgrimages, penances, and other carnal mortifications;

while the Deity of the Protestant is to be appraised and man himself 'justified,' by faith alone. In every part, too, of the Christian creed there is this balance and compensation. If there is 'original sin' and 'total depravity,' there is also 'redemption by grace,' if in Adam all fell in Christ shall all be made alive. No sinner can be so degraded as to be beyond the pale of hope, no sin so heinous as to be without remedy and atonement. Even the unpardonable sin, 'the sin against the Holy Ghost,' is no exception, for if you are afraid you have committed it, you thereby prove that you are not completely hardened, and, therefore, not entirely cut off. While, if you have no fear of it, or, indeed, have never thought of it, you do not need comfort and consolation. Even Calvinism which is constructed, theoretically, so as to make it as impossible to throw out a balance against it as against death itself practically admits of as much balance and compensation as any other creed. For admitting that the future lot of each of us is inexorably determined before our birth, practically it need not give any of us the slightest concern. For were you the prince of sinners, and your case apparently the most desperate, still God may have hardened your heart for the time being in order the better to show forth His mercy in reclaiming you, or, like the thief on the cross, you may only learn at the eleventh hour that you are one of 'the elect,' if, on the other hand, you have always tried to do what was right, and now feel the assurance of God's mercy to you, what better guarantee could you have that you are among the number of the saved? Were it nothing more, indeed, the very uncertainty of the personal application of this doctrine to the case of each individual, like the uncertainty of the time of death, would make it practically of no effect on our life and conduct.

The same provision for a *balance* is seen too, in those superstitions of the Middle Ages which grew out of the prevailing religion, but which dealt chiefly with the different modes in which the Devil interferred in human affairs. Did a

man live in fear of the malice of witches? there were ways by which that malice could be averted; or of the evil eye? there were means of rendering it impotent; or of the possession of demons? there were potent charms and incantations by which they were to be cast out.

In no religion with which I am acquainted is this *balanced* structure wanting. Even the 'Religion of Humanity' of Auguste Comte, which has no future life, no resurrection, no heaven or hell, is bound to find an immortality in the race; a resurrection, in the reappearance of our best thoughts in those who are to come after us; a heaven and hell, in the approbation and disapprobation of the good. The only apparent exception is in the Nirvâna or Annihilation which is the heaven of the Buddhists; but it is apparent only. For some time, I confess, this Nirvâna was a stumbling-block to me, as it seemed to run directly counter to my theory; but the more I thought of the matter, the more convinced I became that it was simply incredible that the vast millions of human beings who own the religion of Buddha, should find consolation and indemnification for the ills of life in simple annihilation or nothingness; or even in that release of the soul from the bondage of the lower desires, which is believed by some Oriental scholars to be the true meaning of Nirvâna. And, on looking around for some positive testimony to corroborate this *à priori* conviction, I found, in the pages of Max Muller, that although Buddha himself meant by Nirvâna, nothingness, snuffing-out, annihilation, the feelings of the masses who accepted his religion converted this nothingness and annihilation into a kind of paradise; and Buddha, who denied the existence of a deity, into a deity himself. No more striking instance, it appears to me, could be afforded of how truly Religions are constructed on the great Law of the Balances, which we have just illustrated.

The three cardinal features, then, of all religions, viz., the *number* of the gods, the *character* of the gods, and the *relations*

in which men stand to their gods, are constructed on the two laws which we have just illustrated, or say, rather, are evolved from them. And, in passing, I may remark that I have used the term 'constructed' in reference to religions, because they have all been framed by man to meet certain great ends or wants of his nature, I have used the term, 'evolved,' because no one generation of men have constructed them by *conscious* forethought, but, rather, successive generations have been engaged in gradually, and more or less unconsciously, moulding them to their present shape. But, besides these great cardinal features common to all religions, we have still to account for those minor details which are peculiar to the various creeds, churches, and sects, and which separate and distinguish them from each other. Now, although the influences that have united to produce these differences are too many and various to be brought under any general law, they may, nevertheless, all be summed up under a few broad, general categories. First in order, perhaps, is the peculiar genius of the Founder of the religion. For, although the broad characteristics of the religions that were given to man by Moses, Confucius, Buddha, and Mahomet were the products of general needs and ideas of which these men were only the mouthpieces and exponents still, much of the minuter structure was, no doubt, due to special points of knowledge, the result of their peculiar training and experience, to special ways of looking at life and emphasizing its various aspects, the result of their peculiar character, temperament, or genius. But of perhaps greater influence than the particular genius of the Founder, are the special types of mind of the various Doctors and Theologians who, in the successive periods of a religion's history, have been engaged in shaping and elaborating it. How great, for example, has been the influence of St Paul's peculiar genius on the entire subsequent form and development of Christianity. Everywhere, the interpretation, the logical arrangement and development he gave to the body of facts and doctrines bequeathed to

him by Christ (although, in all essentials, harmonizing, doubtless, with the current opinion of the infant Church) bears in its minuter structure, as well as in its general features, the impress of one single and striking individuality. And, still later in the history of Christianity, who can deny the influence of St. Augustine and the Fathers on the subsequent development of Catholicism; or of the peculiar genius of Calvin, Luther, Cranmer, or Knox, on the various sections of the Church most closely associated with their names? To the personal influence of theologians on the details of religious creeds, may also be added the personal influence of those great Temporal Potentates who have from time to time interfered, as did Roman emperors, and even empresses, in the deliberations of ecclesiastical Councils, and inspired or dictated decisions which still remain embodied in the Christian creed. And although these various personal and individual influences which have tintured the body of religious thought as it has passed down the ages, have been more or less washed out by succeeding generations, when not in accord with their habits of thought, still, much that is the special product of personal individuality will remain after all deductions.

If individual genius and character have thus had a great influence in modifying the minuter structure of religions, so, too, have those considerations of Expediency which have the effect of bringing religious beliefs into accord with existing moral and intellectual needs. As Civilization advances, the face of the world changes; the old structure of society breaks up; nations pass from despotic to feudal, and from feudal on to democratic forms of government and social organization; slavery is replaced by citizenship, and warfare by peaceful industry; and, at each transition, the new relations into which the different sections of society are thrown to each other have to be adjusted afresh. It was one of the most splendid instances of the practical sagacity of the Roman Catholic Church, that it sought, by means of the decisions of its

Councils and its Popes, to add such new doctrine to the original body of revealed truth as would meet the new relations constantly springing up in a society which was undergoing vast transformations of structure, the only drawback being that, instead of making its decisions *relative* to the time and place, it was bound, by the nature of the case, to make them *absolute*, and binding in all times and in all places. The consequence was, that it was unable to retreat from any position which it had once taken up, and thus many of the old papal decisions, notably those against usury—the legitimate interest on money lent—and its fulminations against Science, remain as standing protests against its method and teaching. But we need not go back to the past to exemplify the effect of expediency in modifying the minuter structures of creeds, for at no time has this influence been more apparent than at the present. Within living memory, how different is the teaching of the Church on the most important points of Christian doctrine and practice, as, for example, on the nature and duration of future punishment, the six days' creation, the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, the miracles of the Old and New Testament, as well as on Sunday observances, theatre-going, and the like.

And, lastly, as explaining the minuter structure of religious forms, there is the power of Tradition, or the tendency there is in man to accept the old as the basis of future change, rather than to begin *de novo*, the effect being that much of the detail of religious doctrine and practice is made up of traditions that have floated down from the earlier times, modified or transformed to meet the necessities of the present hour. Much of the early ritual of Catholicism was merely the modification of Jewish and Pagan rites, and much of our present ritual is a modification again of the early forms, and can be traced back to them through all disguises. Thus tracing of the transformations which religious creeds and religious practices, on the one hand, have undergone from age to age, and of the

circumstances of the world out of which they grew, and to which they were adapted, on the other; marks the extent, I may observe in passing, to which the Theory of Evolution can throw light on the great question of Religion.

CHAPTER IV.

MENTAL EFFECTS.

IF in the last two chapters we have correctly traced the great laws on which Religion is constructed, we shall now be in an easy position to estimate scientifically its *effects* on human life; as it is evident that the laws of the mind out of which it arises, must be the other side, as it were, of the necessities of the mind, which it is designed to meet.

Now, the first law which we saw entered into the construction of Religion, was the law that we are bound, by our intellectual nature, to represent the Cause of things in terms of our own intellectual culture and standard of morality. The first great function, therefore, of Religion is to give *satisfaction* to the craving of the mind to know the cause and origin of things. A glance at the different religions of the world will show that they all have given just such answers to the question of the origin of things as best harmonized with the knowledge and moral culture of the peoples by whom they have been accepted. To the enquiry of the lowest savage and fetisch-worshipper, as to the cause of the phenomena around him, Religion replied that they were due to the wills of indwelling spirits like his own; and what more natural and harmonious explanation could be given him in his stage of culture, knowing nothing, as he did, of the natural causes of things? To the same enquiry by the great mass of the people who accepted the Polytheistic systems of Paganism, Religion answered that the great movements of Nature were due to the presiding influence of Jupiter, Neptune, Thor, and the rest; and no more natural answer could be given to these questions at the time these religions were promulgated. Of course, as Science and Culture advanced,

these explanations became discredited among the learned and cultivated; but they still kept their hold on the vulgar mind until they were finally swept away by the new religion of Christianity, which not only gave an explanation of the cause of things more in harmony with the advanced state of civilization and culture, but which held out an ideal of life more in harmony with the new situation in which men found themselves, and with the new ideas that were beginning to appear as to the destiny of man. And for centuries, indeed, until quite recently, this religion of Christianity continued to give as credible an explanation as, in the existing state of knowledge, could be given of the origin of things and of the phenomena of human life. If it, too, after its splendid career, has at last become discredited by the cultured and enlightened, it still remains, consecrated by tradition and authority, the most feasible explanation which the great masses of men can give of the origin of the world and the nature of man.

Now, if the first function of Religion is to furnish an answer to the question of the origin of the World and the phenomena of Human Life, in what respect, it may be asked, does it differ from Philosophy? In essence, not at all; for all religions were once philosophies, and to those who believe in them are so still. They may be, and indeed are, more than philosophies; but philosophies they certainly are. Ask, for example, the most ignorant type of Christian what his theory is of the cause and origin of Nature, of the cause and origin of the phenomena of human life, and his reply will be that the six days' creation of Genesis is a sufficient explanation to him of the cause and origin of Nature; and the Fall of Adam, and the 'original sin' transmitted by hereditary descent through that fall, is a sufficient explanation of the phenomena of human life. And what is this but his *Philosophy* of the world and of human life? It is the same, too, with other religious mythologies, which are merely the philosophies which the various peoples have of the world and of human life. Indeed, Religion may be defined to

be the philosophy of the masses and historically, the different religions of the world will be found to be philosophies which have become bankrupt with the most advanced minds, but which still retain their credit with the great masses of the people. How gross and primitive an explanation of the world and of human life was the popular mythology of Paganism, for example, when compared with the splendid and refined systems of Plato, Aristotle, and even Epicurus, or the six days' creation of Genesis, when compared with the philosophy of Evolution? Not only as *intellectual* systems will religions be found to be crude and vulgar philosophies, but *morally*, also, they will be found to be low and primitive. What a low standard of morality, for example the old Pagan religion of Greece must have inculcated, when the popular account given of the morality of the gods was so disgraceful, that Plato would have banished the Iliad from his Republic, for fear of its corrupting effects on the minds and morals of the young. In the Norse, Mahomedan, and Christian religions, too, what a base conception of the moral order of the world was involved in those feasting and banquets, bright-eyed maidens, and harps of gold on the one hand, and purgatory, brimstone, and pecuniary expiations on the other, when compared with that splendid doctrine of 'Compensation' of recent philosophy, in which reward and punishment, instead of being postponed to an unknown and hypothetical future, are instant, unfailing, and entire,—a doctrine that has for reward, simply the enlargement of our own nature, and for punishment, that loss of manhood, and moral descent in the scale of being, which all evil action entails. But I fear that to some this loss of manhood would be a comparatively trivial matter, so long as their bodies and pockets escaped unscathed. In our own time, too, how low and retrograde has been the teaching of the Church, when compared with each and every school of existing Philosophy. While all schools of Philosophy, without exception, are preaching peace it permits and even encourages war when

they all denounced the institution of slavery, it upheld and consecrated it. Instead of the political liberty and equality of Philosophy, the Church encourages, if it does not directly inculcate, political inequality; instead of the elevation of the masses, which is the end Philosophy has at heart, the Church labours, both by word and deed, at their repression. I am aware, that it may be said, and with truth, that the precepts and example of Christ must not be confounded with the practices and precepts of the Church; but I do not allow that men shall have credit given them for *ideal* precepts and examples which they profess to follow, when the Church, which embodies the *real* opinions and prejudices of these very individuals, preaches doctrines antagonistic to these precepts, and permits practices inconsistent with these examples.

If the first function of Religion is to satisfy the *intellect* in its demand for cause, its second function is to satisfy the cravings of the *imagination* and *heart*. It is in this that it differs chiefly from Philosophy, which, although it satisfies the demand for cause, does not, in its legitimate province, primarily aim at arousing the imagination, conscience, or emotions. Now, Religion satisfies the cravings of the heart and imagination, in virtue of that second law on which we saw it was constructed—the law, viz., that the mind, being a harmonious structure, must balance itself or go to wreck; which is tantamount to saying that satisfaction must somewhere be found for the cravings of every faculty, impulse, and sentiment of our nature. We have already seen that there must be some balance to the ills of life; and that its worries, crosses, and disappointments would sting the mind into revolt, or precipitate it into madness, were there no hope of reparation somewhere. Now, Religion is that bright star on which the eye and heart are fixed, when all things earthly have become hopeless and distracted. And just as the different religions of the world give equal *intellectual* satisfaction to their devotees, by being equally adapted to their various stages of culture, so they give equal satisfaction to

men's *hearts* and *imagination*s by their exact adaptation to the ideals and aspirations of the various peoples by whom they have been embraced. The Valhalla of the Norsemen, for example, with its feasting and trophies, and companionships of the brave, was precisely what those rough old warriors most aspired to in this world while to be sent down to the Hell of cowards, was precisely what on earth they would most have reprobated and feared. The sensuous heaven of Mahomet, with its bright-eyed houris and its beautiful pleasure gardens, blooming like orises, was the realization of the inmost desires of those wild Arabs of the desert. In the Christian Heaven too, provision has been made, with admirable foresight, for every rank and order of devotee. There is the sensuous heaven of those who have not had enough of the good things of this life, and who are promised reparation hereafter the material heaven of the worldly, with its rivers of gold its gates of pearl its streets of precious stones, the refined heaven of the aesthete, with its music and art, its angels with golden lumps and general intellectual dilettantism the moral heaven of the pure, the virtuous, and the good. In a word, to each according to his aspirations and ideals, has been opened up a heaven, which shall give satisfaction to that insatiable hunger of the heart and soul which nothing finite and earthly can allay but which can find satisfaction alone in those infinite vistas of beatitude promised in the world to come.

Religion satisfies the *heart* and *imagination*, not only by giving the souls of men an entrance into the highest life which, in their stage of culture, they are capable of conceiving or appreciating, but also by stilling that sense of awe and uncertainty which we feel in the presence of a Power who has created us, but has not been created by us, on whom we depend, but who does not depend on us. The immensity and power of the great elements of earth air, and sea, the capriciousness of fortune, the thin tenure under which we hold this mortal body, the insignificance of man in the presence of that great Nature

out of which he has emerged and into which he hastens, all inspire the mind with awe, with a sense of fear and insecurity, as if things would hurt us unless we can succeed in winning them over to ourselves, and converting their unknown hostilities into friendship. Now, it is Religion, under its different forms, that gives to the different races of men the feeling of security and rest, in the midst of these unknown and untamed forces. It is the worship and honours paid to ancestral spirits, which give the savage the necessary feeling of security against those natural evils, which, in the absence of scientific knowledge, he attributes to the agency of evil spirits bent on doing him mischief. It was the sacrifices of the Jews to Jehovah, the consent of the Oracle among the Greeks, that gave the feeling of reliance so essential to successful enterprise. It is the prayers of the Christian, his fasts and penances, the assurance given him, that, although for a season the wicked may flourish, in the end the righteous will triumph, that gives him that feeling of trust, which, in this confused whirlwind of things, were otherwise denied him. I do not doubt what may be alleged by Scientists, that each particular new law of Nature discovered and conformed to, would give us a sense of security from one particular quarter; and that a complete knowledge of these natural laws, and obedience to them, would give us that complete security which would render the old prayers, worship, and rites of religion unnecessary. But there is one thing which no knowledge of the laws of Nature, however complete, can give, and that is the assurance that the great web of laws, which make up the material and moral world, shall work *upwards* to divine and diviner issues. What is there in the law of Evolution, for example, which can give us guarantee that the inspiration and hope of humanity shall be realized, and that Mankind shall ascend to *higher* and higher stages of morality, and sympathy, and love? What is there in the law of Evolution that would have enabled us to predict that the bloody wranglings and brute loves of apes would give rise to a

higher order of being—Man—rather than a *lower*, which would have been more natural, or that the confused fighting, the unregulated passions, the brute force (all of which, when indulged, should lead downwards and not upwards) of the savage man, should give rise to the civilized man? What is there in the law of Evolution that would have enabled us to foresee that the law of might—the struggle for existence—which prevails in the animal world, would work itself up into the law of right, which prevails among mankind and is the goal towards which the civilized races are more and more approximating? In a word, what is there in the law of Evolution that would necessitate that out of fierce despotism should come forth liberty, out of slavery, freedom, out of selfishness, unselfishness, out of might, right, out of fear, reverence, out of lust, love, out of the conflicts of self-interest, morality and virtue? There is nothing whatever in the law of Evolution to necessitate it, on the contrary, all reason points the other way. The fact that it has been so, can give us no security for future advance in the scale of being, except on one condition, and that is, that we underpin the law of Evolution with Religion, that is to say, unless we believe that things are under an intelligent Will, and are so loaded from the first, that the right will emerge, the good be forwarded, the true prevail, in spite of all accidents, possibilities, or stupidities whatever, animal or human, that, just as brute unconscious apes have mounted up to man and savage man up to civilized (the finer qualities emerging in spite of all reason to the contrary), so from the strife of passions, self interests and dollars, the divine will emerge (having been mysteriously slipped in), and will appear in a future yet more glorious and radiant with justice, sympathy, and love. Knowledge of the laws of Nature will, indeed, give us security so long as we conform to and obey them but that such knowledge can give us no assurance for the *future*, may be seen in the fact that although

the laws of Nature teach us from what creature Man has sprung, they cannot throw the least light on what kind of a being will come out of Man; and unless they can do this, how do we know whether Man will become higher and more noble, or brutal, and more base; in a word what security have we for the future progress of the world? The truth is, it is Religion that, by its conviction that the original atoms are so loaded with Deity, so freighted with soul, so predestined to divine issues (in spite of the number of base natures—frogs, serpents, apes, savages—in which these atoms have been incarnated by the way), gives us assurance and guarantee that Humanity will, and must, rise to higher and higher realms of being; a conviction so indispensable to all great action, and which is the inspiration and solace of every lofty spirit. It is Religion, too, and not the law of Evolution, that consoles us in the hour of defeat with the conviction, that, although the ills of life are unavoidable (for *unlimited* desires can never be fully satisfied in a *limited* and finite world), still, the plan is right and beneficent, that all things work together for good, and that Time alone is needed to secure the triumph of the right.

Besides satisfying the heart, by opening up that infinite horizon of hope that crimson the dawn, Religion gives basis and support, soul and reason, to those great ideas of Duty and Right which otherwise could have no deep root in the nature of man, and could claim no deep reverence from him on their own account, however much outward respect and deference he might feel it necessary to pay them, as human expedients essential to the welfare of society. It also gives meaning to that scale and hierarchy of attributes which we are not only conscious of in our own minds, but which we see also in the scale of qualities in the animal world mounting from the worm up to man—qualities which otherwise were all of *equal* rank and pretensions, and all worthy of equal homage. And thus it gives halo and splendour to those *high* heroic attributes

of the mind, which otherwise would dull and tarnish, and life, pulsation, and heart, to a world which otherwise would be a mere aggregate of meaningless powers and forces.

Summing up, then, we may affirm that Religion gives that *harmony* to our intellectual, moral, and emotional nature, which is necessary to its balanced and harmonious activity. It stills the unrest of the *intellect*, by giving to each nation and people, according to its stage of culture, a satisfactory explanation of the cause and origin of things. It satisfies the *heart*, *imagination*, and *conscience*, by opening up a way for the realization of our aspirations and ideals, and so giving an entrance to the soul into the highest life, by making us at home in a Universe, which, until its laws are known, seems indifferent or hostile, and by giving, what the laws of Nature never can give, a reliance and trust that the right will triumph, the good be forwarded, and the true prevail, and thereby communicates to the spirit of man, hope, aspiration, courage, and the conviction that all goes well.

CHAPTER V.

PRACTICAL RESULTS.

IN the last chapter I endeavoured to exhibit the *positive* effects of Religion on Human Life. These effects are true alike of all religions, and can be verified at any time or in any place; and thus have that uniformity and universality which characterize scientific truth. But, as the reader will have observed, they are limited to the *mind*—to the satisfying and harmonizing our moral and intellectual nature, our imagination, conscience, and heart. In this respect, however, the influence of Religion is full and complete, and leaves nothing for the lesser interests of life to fill in; for when it is in harmony with the knowledge and culture of a time, it includes within itself, art and music, poetry and philosophy; all of which are lesser circlets of harmony within that greater circle, and only divorce themselves from it when it becomes superstitious and retrograde. But the practical and all-important question still remains to be answered—what is the effect of Religion on *action* and *conduct*? Now, before we can give a scientific answer to this question, many obscuring complications will have to be removed, and to these, with the reader's indulgence, I now propose briefly to address myself.

The first difficulty, then, that arises to obscure the relationship existing between Religion and Action is the *different* degrees in which Religion has affected action in the different stages of moral and intellectual culture, through which the tribes, peoples, and nations of the world have passed. We have already seen that, in the early civilizations, and among the primitive races, the natural causes of all but the most ordinary circumstances were unknown; and that, in consequence, men

were bound to believe that events were due to the agency of invisible wills like their own or deities. If the wills of deities, and not natural powers, were thus believed to be the real causes of events, it is evident, that the main occupation of life must have consisted, as indeed we know it did, in endeavouring so to act on these wills by means of prayers, sacrifices, offerings, and other religious rites, as to attain the effect desired, instead of, as now, taking advantage of natural powers to further our own ends—as, for example, in the planting and growing of corn, the building of houses and ships, the utilization of steam, electricity, and the like. And furthermore, it followed, that when the oracles and priests, who held the keys of Heaven and were the recognised exponents of the Divine Will, announced either to individuals or peoples that a certain action or enterprise was to be undertaken if they wished a certain result to follow the mandate was sure to be obeyed. And thus it was, that among primitive races and in the early stages of civilization, Religion had a real and commanding influence on conduct and action. As civilization gradually advanced to the point where almost all the circumstances of life were seen to be traceable to natural causes, men began to attend more and more to these causes, and, except on special occasions of great and unexpected calamity, to care less and less (as at the present time) for the wills of deities and the injunctions of priests. And when the time shall arrive that all natural phenomena whatever will be seen to be due to natural causes alone, Religion will and must cease to have any direct effect on practical life, but will continue to be, what we have already seen it to be, the sanctuary of the intuitions, the victorious reconciler of knowledge, sentiment and desire, and prayer, instead of being a request for special favours, will be merely the natural outpouring of the emotions in the contemplation of that great Power, from whose perpetual presence flow the opulences of Nature and the harmonies of created things.

In the next place, it is evident that before we can estimate

rightly the effect of Religion on Action, we must be assured that it is *adapted* to men's intellectual and moral needs, for, were it otherwise, it could not be accepted with that inward conviction which alone can affect our conduct or action, but at most would be outwardly and nominally professed. And hence, the first complication that must be taken into account is the great differences of intellectual culture and moral refinement that exist in even the most advanced communities, nominally professing one religion—differences which would necessitate as many different religions to meet them as there are stages of culture. In London alone, for example, before we could test the natural effect of Religion on action, we should require instead of one broad form—Christianity—which is imposed indifferently on all, as many different forms as there are distinct moral and intellectual grades. For even assuming that all men were alike in the keenness and sensibility of their religious feelings, only a certain proportion of the population would find the existing religion in harmony with its moral and intellectual culture, and likely, therefore, so to interest or excite them as to have any effect on their action or conduct. Take, for example, the Whitechapel ‘rough,’ with his delight in dog-fights and rat-matches, and his belief that men like Tom Sayers are the highest types of manhood—is it not evident, that for him, and the numerous class of youth that feel with him, the Christian religion is much too refined a conception; and that he would find the Valhalla of the Norsemen much nearer his ideal, much more congenial to his moral and intellectual nature, than the Heaven of the peaceful, pious, and refined Christian? Much has been made, I am aware, of the numerous ‘conversions’ that have accrued to the Christian religion from this class; but many of them, I fear, are to be attributed to the inducements held out by the lower side of that religion, rather than to its higher and more refined attractions. For, although the love of Christ, if opportunely presented, and preached with sufficient fervour to reach the imagination, will take hold of the lowest

and most obdurate natures, and, when it does so, is full and all-sufficient in itself ; still, the great majority of men are held permanently to a religion, as to other things, by its staple attractions, its steady-going comforts and consolations ; and can be reached only by a religion which harmonizes and is on a level with their moral and intellectual culture. While some members of the community are thus below the level of the prevailing religion, others, again, are above it and beyond its influence. Many of the best heads and hearts in the world of to-day, find the beliefs which Christianity inculcates, and the rewards and punishments which it dispenses, too crude and gross for their reason and imagination, and so can be moved neither in mind nor heart by its teachings. Bereaved in spirit, they sit as if paralysed, waiting for such form to arise in the future as shall give them the harmony and satisfaction they require. But, just as these classes are uninfluenced by Christianity, so Christians are uninfluenced by those high and spiritual forms to which the most advanced minds have ascended, and in which they have found harmony and rest. It is not, indeed, likely, that men whose hearts and imaginations can be aroused only by the contemplation of a God who has to be figured in human shape as palpable as if he were their next-door neighbour, should be able to take the slightest hold of a Power whose nature and attributes are so refined and spiritual as to transcend, while including, the limitations of humanity. What chance, indeed, is there that men, who can be kept from sin only by brimstone and the cry of fire, will be kept from it by the fear merely of that descent in the scale of being which all evil action entails ; or that men, who can be incited to virtue only by the prospects of a future sensuous beatitude, will be incited to it simply by that enlargement, elevation, and expansion of mind which always attend on devotion to the good, the beautiful, and the true ? Indeed, I have known priests descend from their high vocation to play the spiritual demagogue, and have heard them ask their flocks, with a sneer,

whether there was anything to lay hold of in such impalpable, bloodless, and beatified conceptions of God and moral retribution; and have seen them pause as if silently waiting an apology from those who had dared to be guilty of the more refined conception!

Before, then, we can scientifically estimate the effect of Religion on Action, we must allow for the large element, in communities professing one religion, of persons who, from intellectual and moral culture, are either *above* or *below* its influence. But, even were Religion really accepted by all those persons in a community by whom it is nominally professed, we should still have to allow, in estimating its effects on conduct, for the great diversity of *temperament* and disposition through which it has to pass before it can be translated into action. In this respect, indeed, it does not differ from other agencies. How different, for example, are the effects of the same piece of good news, the same stroke of fortune, on the lymphatic and the nervous, the sanguine and the melancholic, the grave and the light-hearted. What incentive to action can be more universal and omnipotent than the desire for wealth, and yet how differently it affects the conduct of the miser, and the ordinary man of the world. It is the same, too, with Religion. Although it is believed by two men with equal sincerity and honesty, with the one, perhaps, through some peculiarity of constitution, it gets no further than the intellect and the imagination, where it hangs and revolves in a dreamy perpetual delight, ever returning on itself, but never affecting the life; while, with the other, it frets the soul like an imprisoned spirit until it has worked its way out into conduct and action.

A still further complication which confuses our perception of the effect of Religion on Action, is the influence believed to be exerted over men's minds by the fear of Hell and future retribution. And, without dwelling on the fact that the popular idea of Hell, belonging as it does to a stage of culture that is quickly passing away, is bound to disappear from the

pure Religion of the Future (although the idea of natural compensation—of punishment by the loss of manhood—inheres in the very genius and structure of the world), a little reflection will satisfy us that the fear of Hell is not a potent factor in human life, and has little or no effect on conduct and action. It is true, that when the last days of life are consciously drawing nigh—as in the case of criminals awaiting their execution, or of persons sensible that they are being hurried away by a mortal disease—the fear of Hell must exercise a potent influence over men's thought, and the little of conduct and action that may yet remain to them, but in health and the heady vigour of life it has little or no influence. For just as death although certain and inexorable, has, as everyone can testify little or no influence on healthy human activity when life is in its prime but is at most an unpleasant possibility with which we can have no practical concern, to be dismissed as soon as possible when its dark shadows come over the mind, so the idea of Hell—which, if more horrible, is not more certain than death—is robbed of its effect on action and conduct by virtue of that law of the Balance, whereby, as we have seen, no idea that is horrible or painful can long continue to dominate a healthy human mind, but must be balanced or neutralised by such real or ideal considerations as in each particular instance seem natural and just—in the instance of Hell by the chances of our having time to repent even at the eleventh hour, by the secret trust that a life of truly honest duty will not in the end be dashed by the neglect of mere forms and observances, and the like.

If the fear of Hell has little or no direct influence on Practical Life, neither indeed has the hope of Heaven. As the reconciler, harmonizer, and comforter of the feelings of the mind, when outraged by the inequalities of fortune and the injustices of the world the idea of future reward plays as we have seen, a most important, and, in certain stages of culture an indispensable part in human life—but as a direct

object of desire held out before the human mind, as before a jaded beast, to lead it on, it is of little or no avail. For, in spite of the beatitudes, and glories indescribable, which the true and devout Christian believes to be impatiently awaiting him, I have noticed, that when illness brings him at last within the very shot and range of his dreams, he betrays no special anxiety to depart, but, on the contrary, exhibits rather a hankering desire still to remain in this poor world, with all its troubles; any cheerful word of hope held out to him being taken as a special comfort and consolation, and not, as might be expected, a frustration and disappointment. The truth is, in spite of the real and solid nature of Heaven and Hell to men in the lower stages of culture, and in spite of the asceticisms and mortifications with which these ideas have been associated in history; no ideal, however fancy-painted, can take hold of the hearts and imaginations of healthy men or women like that great world of *human* aspiration and effort in which we live, and to which, after all, our faculties and activities are adapted.

But there still remains a complication which, perhaps more than any other, has obscured the just effect of Religion on Action, and that is the splendid achievements ascribed directly to Religion—the wonders wrought by it both on individuals and nations. The marked effect of Religious Enthusiasm on the life and character of the individual while it lasts—the inward peace and joy, the love and self-sacrifice, the unselfish pursuit of souls, the reformation in personal morals, habits, and associations—as well as the miracles of achievement which nations have performed under its influence—the splendour of the Mahommedan conquests, the fiery enthusiasm of the Christian Crusades, the marvellous energy, heroism and self-sacrifice that have characterised the rise, not only of new religions as Buddhism, Mahommedanism, Christianity, but also of new sects, as Puritanism, Methodism, and even Mormonism—have all contributed to produce a conviction in men's minds of the preponderating influence of Religion on human conduct

and action over that of all other agencies. Now, the fallacy in this appears to me to be due to that want of the power of detachment which, as I have shown in an earlier chapter, is the cause of nearly all the great illusions of the world, and which prevents men from separating in thought, the *feeling* from the *object* which calls it forth. For these wonders which are believed to be due to Religion, are evidently really due to Enthusiasm; and any object whatever, that can be so presented as to rouse the enthusiasm of individuals or nations, will have precisely the same influence over their conduct and action. The enthusiasm for Liberty, for example, so intense in France at the time of the Revolution, stirred the nation to enterprises as great, and individuals to personal sacrifices as sublime, as those which are ascribed to Religion. The enthusiasm for Country, too, has had the same effect, as seen in the great patriots of the American and Italian revolutions; the enthusiasm for King, as in the English civil wars; the enthusiasm for Humanity, as among the opponents of the slave power in North America; while the enthusiasm of Love has worked in individuals of every age and clime transformations as great, and self-sacrifices as noble and heroic, as those of Religion.

And now to pause for a moment, to sum up the complications which we have just seen must be brushed aside before we can get a direct insight into the effect of Religion on Action.

In the first place, we have to bear in mind, that in the early civilizations of the world, when supernatural wills were believed to be the real causes of events, Religion, which alone could influence these supernatural wills, had supreme and controlling power over men's lives and actions; but that, as Science gradually referred more and more of what were formerly attributed to supernatural wills to the agency of natural causes, Religion had less and less influence over men's lives, and Science more and more. Secondly, we must allow for the circumstance, that in highly organized communities like our

own, many persons who nominally profess the current religion, have no real belief in it, owing to its being too high or too low for their stage of intellectual and moral culture; and therefore we must, in estimating the influence of Religion, leave their conduct and action out of account. Thirdly, we must allow for the very different modes in which religions, like other beliefs, show themselves in action; owing to the great diversity of individual temperament and disposition through which they have to pass. Fourthly, we must be prepared to discount largely the popular belief in the effect of Hell on men's conduct and action, when we consider, that, even in the days when it was a serious reality, it had, like death, little direct influence on daily life, owing to the balances that were thrown out against it; obviously, therefore, now that it is greatly discredited, it has little or none. And lastly, we must eliminate from the problem those wondrous transformations of individual character, those marvels of irrational achievement which religious enthusiasm has wrought, and which are popularly believed to be the effect of the religion, instead of being, as we have seen, the effect of the enthusiasm—quite a different matter.

The leading misconceptions which obscure the effects of Religion on Action being thus removed, we are now sufficiently close to the main issue to grapple with it directly. From the drift of the foregoing pages, the reader will doubtless have surmised that I regard Religion, in its true sphere, as having no effect on action; and this, with proper modifications, I am prepared to admit. For, although I have shown that, in early stages of culture, Religion exercised a commanding influence over men's conduct and action, still that influence was due rather to its character as a *Philosophy* than as a *Religion*. When supernatural wills were believed to be the real causes of events, they, of course, influenced men's actions like other natural causes; that is to say, they influenced them as *Science* or knowledge would, not as *Religion*. When men, for example, believed that the lightning was the expression of the anger of

a deity, they of course regarded that anger as they would any other natural cause, and took such means as they deemed most appropriate to avert it. When they believed that Heaven would rain calamities on them if they permitted heresy or false doctrine in their midst, to avert these calamities they took what appeared to them the most natural way of appeasing Heaven—persecution. It follows, therefore, that when supernatural wills shall cease to be regarded any longer as real causes of any event, Religion, as a positive agency, will cease to have any direct effect on action. To what, then, it will be asked, are those effects on conduct and action to be attributed, which were formerly attributed to Religion? In a former chapter, we saw that justice was done in this world by the pressure exerted over the individual conscience by the general feelings of the community, rather than by the force of the individual conscience itself. In the same way, we may say, that men's actions and conduct, in a positive sense—what they will do, not what they will refrain from doing—are determined by those *habits, aims, and ambitions*, which are bred in a nation by the *necessities* of its situation and surroundings, and which are imposed on its individual members. That these, and not Religion, are the determining agencies in conduct and action will be seen when we consider how impotent Religion is when it has to run counter to them. War, for example, has been bred from the necessities of the circumstances and surroundings of the several European States, since the break-up of the Roman Empire. And although Christianity ran dead against it from the first, nevertheless, the necessities of the tough world proved too much for Religion, and War accordingly remains with us to this day, the commander and military man being held in the highest esteem. But, perhaps, no more pregnant instance could be adduced of the impotence of Religion, when it has to confront modes of conduct and action bred from the circumstances of the world, than the practice of duelling, which indeed, was closely associated with the

military *régime*, and, like it, was practised in the very teeth of the Church. For, to have refused, on Christian grounds, to fight, would have been, until recently, to make oneself an outcast among those very Christians whose principles it outraged. Again, the ambition of each individual to acquire as much wealth as possible for himself, although running counter to the Christian ideal, is a *necessity*, if the industries of the world are to be worked to the utmost extent for the benefit of mankind; hence, the utter impotence of the Church when it preaches against it. The Caste-institution, too, of feudal aristocracy was a *necessary* result of the state of Europe after the barbarian invasions; and hence, in spite of the fact that it ran counter to the genius of Christianity, it has continued to flourish up to the present time, dominating men's aims and ideals and admirations, and supported, too, by the very Church whose fundamental principle—the native equality of souls—it despises and ignores. We might continue to multiply instances, but the above are of sufficient pregnancy to prove that men's actions are determined, not by Religion, but by that code of Public Opinion and Belief which is begotten of their circumstances and conditions. But is it possible to doubt, it may be asked, that men have defied all earthly opinions for the sake of their religion? I do not doubt it, but would remark only, that in these cases Religion has either become with them an enthusiasm, as in the Crusades, Puritanism, Monasticism, and the like, and so their actions are to be set down to the effect of Enthusiasm, rather than of Religion; or it has become, as in the antagonisms of sects, largely a matter of pride and other worldly passions, engaging men's interests and activities as any other worldly object might; or else, it is only one aspect of that general elevation and expansion of soul which is the heritage of the few born in every age who rise above the dull level of contemporary opinion—an elevation and expansion of soul which, disgusted with the coarse ideas, the narrow conceptions, and the false idolatries of the time, and demanding a

more refined and elevated conception in which to rest, inaugurates new religions and ideals of life, new philosophies and sciences, new forms of beauty and art, and so draws on the torpid conservatism of the world to progress and civilization.

To conclude, then, I may say that Religion, in its true and final form, will have no jurisdiction in the field of specific action, but will be restricted to giving that harmony and satisfaction to the intellectual, moral, and emotional sides of our nature, which is necessary to their balanced and healthy activity.

PART V.—GOVERNMENT.

CHAPTER I.

ARISTOCRACY—PRELIMINARY.

THERE are many forms of government and social organization among men; but, in so far as they practically affect the elevation and expansion of the individuals living under them, they may all be reduced to two—the Aristocratic and the Democratic, the principle of *inequality* and the principle of *equality*—all despotisms and kingships being included under Aristocracy; and Socialism (which is only a finer working-out of the idea of equality) under Democracy. In the present chapter I propose to trace the effects of the aristocratic principle on mental and moral expansion; and, as these effects are nowhere better exemplified than in English social life, I shall endeavour so to exhibit the characteristics of the particular aristocratic organization under which we ourselves live, that the permanent and essential spirit of the aristocratic principle itself may be clearly seen.

Before proceeding, however, I desire to make a few preliminary observations, in order to avoid misapprehension.

In the first place, when I speak of the Aristocracy as such, I must be understood to regard them, not as so many independent units of every shade of disposition and culture, but as a body, an institution, an order in the State, the members of which are bound together by common traditions, sympathies, and habits of thought. In the next place, I shall assume that, like every other institution, organization, or association, their

attitude, as a corporate body, to other classes in the State is one of conscious or unconscious self-interest. Perhaps one of our most amiable illusions is the idea that classes are governed by the same moral principles as individuals. We fondly imagine that they will act with the same high and generous impulses which characterize their members in their private capacities. No illusion is at once more seductive and more fatal. Individuals though raised to the purple, may go back to the plough, but classes, once possessed of power, never without compulsion relax their grip. In private life, the rough edge of self-interest is tempered by principle or affection, and selfishness is subordinated to the influence of old associations, to love, honour, friendship admiration or pity. In our personal relations with our fellows, our whole being interacts and alternates, and the higher and nobler, as well as the more selfish attributes of our nature are called into free play and activity. but once we are grouped into circle like circles we can touch on only one point, that of self-interest. All organizations, from the smallest and meanest up to Church and Government, have this as their vital and primary law. The professions, the merchants, the tradesmen the mechanics, have each their *esprit de corps*, as against the rest of the world. Even the Church of God becomes aggressive and selfish the moment it becomes organized and established. Do churchmen and dissenters love one another when fighting for what are called their respective 'causes?' As well expect the soldiers of opposing hosts to embrace each other. Government itself, the hugest of all organizations, is as inexorable as the grave. All are stretched alike on its procrustean bed, without regard to the endless extenuation of circumstances. It is a gigantic, unrelenting machine, enforcing its decrees, collecting its taxes, and upholding the letter of the law, without pity or remorse. In the international relations, too, of war, diplomacy, or trade, where is the magnanimity, the honour, the high morality, that are to

be found between man and man? The truth is, there is a *scale* in moralities. International morality stands at the lowest point—that of pure and undisguised self-interest. Class morality stands next above it; for, although equally selfish in its instincts, it is restrained by the law—which is a kind of public conscience. Social morality, or the relations that exist between man and man, stands highest; although there is a higher flight to be reached, which is as yet almost out of sight. The ‘Ten Commandments’ are a very crude code of morals for modern civilization; and the high virtues of magnanimity, sincerity, and openness of mind, are not yet compulsory, but have still to be embodied in the traditions of the race. As the world at present goes, then, it is absurd to expect that men, banded together for a particular object, will exhibit in that capacity the finer amenities of the mind—its graces, chivalries, and moral refinements. These can only arise between individuals, and, as I shall endeavour to show further on, between equals. And so it is with the Aristocracy. Between them and their tenants, dependents, and parasites, multitudinous influences combine to soften the asperity of power; but between them, as a body, and the other classes in a community, the above considerations will fully justify us in assuming that there is, and can be, no tie but that of self-interest. The defection of any exceptionally high-minded member from the common interest, proves as little as the occasional marriage of one of them with a domestic, and must not be permitted to veil our sight for a moment. However great his prestige and authority, his action is not representative, but is merely that of a unit. Some of the leading families have, in politics, allied themselves in the past with the party of progress, and at present even with the Radicals. Does any one therefore believe that there is any real and vital sympathy between the Aristocracy as a body and the party of progress?

I desire, furthermore, to explain that in my remarks on the effects of Aristocracy on society, I shall speak of its influence

on the great masses of the population, rather than on the few exceptional minds who in every class look at life with a free and disengaged eye. On the great masses of the poor and ignorant, because their elevation and amelioration is the end of all government and legislation, and the reward of all those who devote themselves to the service of humanity. On the great masses of the respectable because only by reflecting their interests, sympathies, and prejudices can men hope to attain wide and paramount influence and authority, the great seminal minds having little influence beyond the narrow circle of the cultivated, and being regarded by the public as *doctrinaires*, a term synonymous with contempt. On the great masses as a body, because their simple faith in *symbols* as if they were serious *realities*, makes them the easy prey of every species of superstition, and, by giving a fictitious greatness and authority to those who mirror their delusions, indirectly perpetuates the evils which we seek to eradicate. Here, for example, are a number of ignorant worshippers prostrate before an image. We perceive that they as sincerely believe in its real and vital efficacy as, when boys we believed in our toys, games, and fairy tales. The priest is quite ready to admit to you, who are a man of insight, that the fetiches he has set up have a symbolical value only, not an intrinsic one. But, by making himself the mouthpiece and exponent of this superstition, he attains an influence in Church and State which else were denied him. The scholastic subtleties, which are to him alone of importance, and are the very kernel and marrow of his thought, would otherwise fall unresponsive on the empty air. Here, again, are a number of peasants, farmers, and country tradesmen, who believe that the nobility are their natural and eternal superiors, of different flesh and blood, and that the fixed strata in society is as much a piece of fate and nature as the strata in the rocks. By virtue of this wide-spread superstition, the nobility retain their power and influence over society, and without it they, too, with their ranks and

pedigrees, their belief in the natural inequality of souls, and in their own 'right to do what they like with their own,' would collapse and vanish.

These illustrations show how important it is to distinguish between the opinions of the learned few—the literati, philosophers, men of science and economists—and the beliefs held by the great masses of the people. While the former are busy exchanging those lofty thoughts which foreshadow the history of the world, and which, when concentrated and combined, will fall like vivifying showers on the future generations, the latter, on some of the most momentous questions of life, are still sunk in that torpor in which they have lain since the dark ages. And, in passing, it is interesting to remark that while the ruling powers ignore the very existence of the thinkers, and the leading organ of public opinion (abetting a too aggressive Philistinism), asks, with a sneer, whether these *doctrinaires* imagine that, like the three tailors of Tooley Street, they are settling the affairs of the world—not an uneasy publican can groan in his dreams, but it is heard and noted, with awe and respect, by both Press and Government, as a movement of 'public opinion;' the nice appreciation and estimate of its strength and volume being regarded as the measure and index of 'practical statemanship.' While the *political* beliefs of the body of the people are thus faithfully reflected, those beliefs which it is the object of this chapter to bring into prominence are to be gathered neither from the politicians nor the Press, but by direct contact with the world itself. There we can see the real and abiding sentiments of men, in so far as they determine their actions or conduct; and can judge as to how far political measures have gone in elevating their lives. The Press is essentially a political medium, and deals almost exclusively with material and economic concerns; and as the will of the people is now the supreme law, its spirit is accordingly democratic, whatever may be the political leanings of different journals. The politician, too, deals with the same

material interests, and in his public utterances is forced to keep out of sight all that is not strictly economic, or to veil it under voluminous clouds of cant and sophistry. For example, if the question of the tenure of land arises, I observe that learned members discuss it as if it turned entirely on the relative value to the community of large or small farms, or the like—the landed interest struggling fiercely to prove the superiority of the former. And, indeed, we hear it everywhere said that the difficulty is, not in finding landlords to sell, but in finding purchasers to buy, as men are too sensible to invest in so unremunerative a commodity. Whereas, if I go about among men, I find that, owing to the dignity and influence attached to the ownership of land, those who hold estates wish to buy more, and would sooner starve than sell an acre of what they already possess. Or again, if I read a leading article on the House of Lords, I find the noble members of that body spoken of as though they were of little more consequence than so many old clothes-men; whereas, if I go down into the counties, I find them sitting majestically apart, like Olympian deities, each on his separate peak. Or, on the other hand, if I read a glowing eulogy on the public appearance of some eminent representative of literature, science, or the arts, I imagine his influence in society will be commensurate with the prominence given to his utterances or performance; whereas, I shall probably find that he is patronized by the nobility, considered of little account by the vulgar, and his calling, whether literary, artistic, or scientific, considered beneath the dignity of persons of quality. So true is this, that in the great works of fiction—and these, after all, are the best mirrors of the opinions, beliefs, and sentiments of the age—it is everywhere taken for granted, as a matter of course.

It has been remarked by a distinguished thinker, that there is at the bottom of every society, an Idea, or Principle, which animates the members of which it is composed, as the mind animates and directs the movements of the body. This idea

differs, of course, in different times and places. In Sparta it was patriotism ; in Judea, religion ; in France, at the time of the Revolution, equality. And just as the spirit of a poem controls the selection of sentiment and incident ; and the spirit of a legislative measure its separate clauses ; so the idea which is at the root of any society dictates its code of morality, its aspirations, sentiments, and habits of thought. In England, at the present time, as in most of the ancient European States, there are two ideas at work—the mediæval Feudal, and the modern Democratic idea. The play and interaction of these two principles determine the movements of English life. Before, therefore, we can estimate aright the part played by each, we must separate, as far as possible, their respective spheres of activity. I rejoice to have lived while the old tree of Feudalism, whose roots are so swiftly decaying, but whose leaves are still fresh and green, yet survives ; for it will be ere long as extinct as the fossil remains of the primæval world. It is interesting to the moralist, as a living illustration of how the spirit of man, which, in our dreams, we fondly imagine to be infinite and free, can be moulded into any shape, stamped with any impress, and made to dance to any tune. It is instructive, too, to the statesman ; as furnishing, by comparison with that democratic state of society which in one nation at least has been completely realized, that second point of observation, which is as essential to the political thinker as it is to the astronomer. A century or two ago, Aristocracy was the paramount and all-pervading influence in English life. Founded on material power as its basis, with rank and birth as its flower and outcome, it set its image and superscription on every department of thought and activity—on legislation, manners, morals, and culture. But for ages there had been growing up alongside of it another influence, which, though still overshadowed by it, was waxing in strength year by year. This, too, was founded on material power, viz., industry and commerce ; and, differing in interest and tradition from the aristocracy, constituted the

democratic element in modern society. It became in time greater in combination, if not in concentration than the aristocracy itself, and, after lying latent and invisible for a while, made its appearance, after the first Reform Bill, as an active power in the State. In its conflict with the aristocracy, the rising democracy first succeeded in winning for itself personal liberty. Many ages had to come and go after the time that Guther the swine-herd wore the brass collar as bond slave of Cedric the Saxon, before the Habeas Corpus Act finally asserted that no Englishman could be arbitrarily detained in prison without being brought to a fair and speedy trial. Personal liberty secure, the tide of democracy next set in the direction of political enfranchisement, and now that the counties are on an equality with the boroughs political liberty is tolerably complete, and with it, the influence of Democracy on English life practically ends. It has secured us personal liberty, so that the haughtiest patrician must submit to be jostled in the public streets like the meanest plebeian. It has secured us a large measure of political freedom, so that the poorest working man in all things else a cipher, without the least influence on thought or culture, has to be flattered and cajoled once, at least, at every turn of the election-wheel. But in all that constitutes the higher life of man—his morals, sentiments, culture, and aspirations—the country is still dominated by aristocratic habits of thought. This domination is, of course not so glaring as it was formerly, for every advance in democracy must modify, to a greater or less degree, the prevailing spirit as a stone thrown into a lake pulses, however imperceptibly against its remotest shores. But this avails little, so long as the ideal which the nation sets before its youth remains practically the same as before. For it cannot be too often repeated that just as the society which a man deliberately prefers is a finer and more sensitive touchstone of his moral quality than any particular action so the ideal which a nation follows is the most significant symptom of its health or disease. It determines its

aims, its aspirations, its desires, its exertions. The Press speaks as if social prestige were a mere bauble and sentiment, compared with political power. Nothing can be more delusive. The mental and moral characteristics of the class that is at the top of society determine the mental and moral characteristics of all the other classes; and its code of morality becomes the national conscience. Though imposed at first by force, it ends usually by being accepted from conviction. Where the heart of a nation resides, there will its people, like pilgrims and lovers, be found wending their way. So powerful is sentiment! It rules our whole being; making all the sordid moneys and vulgar interests of the world its willing ministers. The aristocracy, or land-owning class, having succeeded in keeping themselves by power at the top, have accordingly become the nation's ideal, and their moral and mental lineaments the mirror in which it fashions itself. This ideal is the nation's real religion; and, like all religion, as you will observe, is held with a mystic sanctity, a sacred reserve. Though its influence is as pervasive as electricity, and as sensitive as light, it is never mentioned in conversation; dissentients, like infidels, being afraid of the secret charge of vulgarity and lowness of mind which attaches to them; the faithful, of the more odious imputation of toadyism. I speak, as I have said, of the mass of respectable people; and are not the respectable people the nation? Some persons may make an ideal of literature, science, or the arts, as others see a new era in Shakerism, spirit-rapping, or the water-cure; but the bulk of society is practically untouched by any such heresy.

CHAPTER II.

ARISTOCRACY—

MORAL AND SOCIAL EFFECTS

AFTER the somewhat extended preliminary observations of the last chapter, I am now in a position to consider the special effects of the aristocratic *regime* on the spiritual and moral expansion of the individuals who live under it. Its first and most baleful effect was to imbue the people with a belief in the essential *inequality* of men. This was not directly inculcated as a doctrine, but arose out of the primordial relation between lord and serf, which consisted in the minute and incessant exercise of power on the one hand, and the habit of submission, on the other. As the nation grew, this relation worked itself into the minutest fibres of social life, and the tendency in the human mind, which De Loqueville remarked of regarding our oppressors as our superiors, became embodied among the traditional beliefs of the people. I do not intend to enter again here into the question of the equality or inequality of men considered as an abstract proposition. I shall merely remark, in passing, that the differences in men's capacities no more destroy their mental and moral identity, than differences in their bodily development destroy their physical identity, and I should as soon expect to find new organs in their bodies as new powers and faculties in their minds. I have observed that it is generally the mediocrities, the men of one idea and those who are superior to their neighbours in some petty ingenuity or intellectual knack, who are the greatest sticklers for inequality, for there is no talent so contemptible but that the vanity or pride of its possessor would, if he had the power, make it the ground of superiority to the rest of mankind. So,

likewise, are those who think that fineness or elevation of mind is an affair of pedigree; who know that blood 'must tell;' and who believe that new and higher capacities are to be induced in men, as in dogs and horses, by the careful selection of breeds. But the great men have most clearly perceived and most strongly emphasized the essential *likeness* of all men; the small, superficial differences in power and degree fading away before this grand moral and spiritual identity. It would be absurd, indeed, to deny that immense inequalities exist between man and man, in range, facility, and power. We see men apparently all run to one organ—men with overgrown memories, improvisators, musical prodigies, lightning calculators, and the like; but these mental tuberosities are as much lost in a common humanity, as the inequalities of the earth's surface are lost in its sphere. The true sons of genius, even, are characterized and distinguished by a greater fineness and power of receptivity, rather than by any new or exceptional faculty. But what I desire especially to call attention to is the fact, that while it is certain that men are as alike in their essential natures as they are different in degrees of power, there is a tendency to consider those who are superior in degree, to be different in their essential natures, and to be beings of another order. The Roman Emperors were in many instances addressed and worshipped as deities. The men whom we considered great in our youth, we imagined to be of different natures from ourselves, until by contact we found them to be the same, or by culture, rose to their point of view. And the preponderating weight and authority of the great names of the past are, no doubt partially due to our belief that somehow or other they were different to the men of our own time. These are natural tendencies, and can be corrected by experience, culture, or reflection. But when inequality is made the basis of a social structure, as it is in England, with birth and title as its crowning distinctions, this tendency hardens itself and becomes a concrete, consolidated fact. Then begin the degradation of the human mind, the

corruption of the moral sense, and the reign of injustice. For, without equality, respect degenerates into base servility, dignity into cold-blooded pride or impudent self-assertion. Without it, as I shall show, virtue is regarded as a commodity; morality, a question of social status, talent, a more dextrous or efficient tool; genius, a more refined buffoonery, flattered and despised. The man of title becomes the beau-ideal, the great, the admirable, the flower of the race, the elect of Heaven. Elevated as an exemplar for our imitation and even worship, his patronage is regarded as the sweet and sufficient solace for all the toilsome efforts of all the great workers who have made England the envy of the nations—poets, inventors, philanthropists, men of science, and philosophers. This apotheosis of idleness and torpid repose sinks into the souls of the people, and degrades, in their estimation, those who are the real glory of the nation, for no man can serve two masters, or follow with equal ardour two opposite ideals at once. With this anomalous position of the really great men, it is not surprising that the ‘masters’ themselves should be regarded as tools, chattels, and property, rather than human beings with immortal spirits. A copper firmament closes down on them, smothering all expansion of mind and heart, and shutting out their energies from all the higher planes of aspiration. No broad and open thoroughfare opens out to them in which they can walk, relying on their ability and character as men, but every step is clogged, and artificial passports are demanded at every turn. The few and uncertain vents hypothetically provided for their emergence from their lowly estate, are practically closed to them by reason of impassable currents of prejudice, and insurmountable barriers of caste. A base materialism prevails, and men instead of being regarded as temples or a divine presence, are regarded as so many cattle, with labels affixed to their foreheads, and values written thereon; so much for a lord, so much for a ‘gentleman,’ so much for a working-man. Between individuals so unequally freighted and handicapped from birth there is as little chance

of justice being done in this world, as between men and the lower animals : for there is no common social measure to which their actions are referred. They may be equal before the law ; but this deadly inequality, this false and artificial halo of sentiment, which surrounds the one and is shorn from the other, stupefies the higher conscience, and renders the preaching of morality and duty, let alone Christianity, a hypocrisy and a sham. For whoever withholds from me, by reason of my birth or occupation, the encouragement, sympathy, respect, and approbation to which my character as a man entitles me, denies me justice ; and, although the law may recover the gold that is filched from me, I am robbed of that which is dearer than gold, and which it is the ultimate object of all gold to buy.

Another direct result of the aristocratic *régime* is the ignorance and degradation of the masses. A deep-rooted aversion (compounded of pride and fear) to the education of the people has always characterized aristocracies, and inheres in their very nature. They have done all they could, in every age, to prevent the intellectual elevation of the people, and have succeeded in proportion to their power ; from the despotism of the slave-owners in America, who made it penal to teach a slave to read or write, to the more subtle and intangible despotism of the aristocracy in England, who trained their dependents, as they did their dogs and horses, to as much knowledge only as would enable them to ‘do their duty in the sphere of life to which it shall please God to call them.’ In this conspiracy to stifle the aspirations of the human mind, they were abetted by a Church, linked and allied to the ruling powers, whose clergy, pledged to proclaim abroad the doctrine of their Master—the equality of souls—have betrayed their sacred trust and gone over to the enemy. By holding out to the lower orders an ideal Heaven, where their miseries will be redressed, and their higher natures find that range and expansion denied them in this world, they have confirmed the evil which it was their mission to eradicate. They have smothered at birth, in these weary-laden souls, the

bright and inborn aspirations of the mind—its dignity, independence, and self-reliance—and have left them to grovel in torpid despair.

These results follow the ascendancy of a privileged and hereditary class, as surely as the waters follow the moon. They commence with it, advance as it advances, and decline as it declines. No ingenious subtleties, no historical pedantries, can show that they are the effects of this or the other poor secondary cause. If the account I have given is in any way overdrawn, the amelioration must be placed to the credit of the swiftly-advancing Democracy, but the balance may be charged to the principle of Aristocracy. This will be at once evident if, leaving generalities and descending to the details of social life, we contrast the state of social morality that is engendered in democracies, and notably in America, by the equality of men, with that which prevails in England under the aristocracy.

* In democracies, no man need feel ashamed of his calling, for all work is alike honourable—industry, trade, bodily labour; but, in England, the aristocracy as a body are neither engaged in trade, industry, nor bodily labour, and consequently society has agreed that persons following these pursuits are of an inferior caste. So deeply has this feeling saturated the souls of men, that for a respectable family to have one of its members engaged in trade, is a fatal 'bar on its escutcheon,' and any reference to it is as studiously avoided in conversation, as if it were a moral leprosy. The tradesman himself, unable to resist this overwhelming pressure of public opinion, meekly bows to it, and basely accepts the livery of servility. The iron has entered his soul; and, like a fall from virtue in woman, farewell for ever to all hope of dignity, erectness of mind, or magnanimity. We need not feel surprised that trade is derogatory, when we remember that even the Church of Christ itself was barely

* The remainder of this chapter is to be regarded as true of the England of ten or twenty years ago rather than of the England of to-day, so swiftly indeed has the incoming tide of Democracy obliterated the old social landmarks.

respectable until the aristocracy embraced it, having discovered how rich a pasture it offered to the members of their own body. It is little more than two centuries since, as Macaulay has shown, the great body of the clergy were regarded as a superior order of menials; sufficiently happy if, at the houses of the great, they were allowed to sit with the upper servants at the lower end of the table. The only profession not considered derogatory to a gentleman of birth was the profession of arms, and this, you will observe, was the only one absolutely necessary to the existence of his class.

If all work is alike honourable in democracies, all idleness is equally ignoble, and is visited with marks both of public and private disapprobation. But, in England, where idleness is the Elysium of the aristocracy, the commercial activity of the nation, otherwise so essential to its well-being, shows like a break-neck struggle, in which merchants, shop-keepers, and publicans jostle each other in their efforts to reach that goal of gentlemanly ease which is the heritage of the well-born. In every age and country, pride and love of domination have been sweet to the human heart. They abound in democracies as elsewhere, but any manifestation of them is a disparagement; and has to be repressed, or veiled under soft and inoffensive forms. But, in England, these passions have been the traditionary prerogatives of the aristocracy from time immemorial; and, accordingly, in spite of the professional exhortations of the clergy to humility, they are regarded by the people with admiration; and their outward manifestation, either in word or expression, at once marks the 'gentleman.'

In democracies, a man who refuses to pay his just debts is held dishonoured by society; but, in England, the aristocracy, from an early period, drew a convenient distinction between debts of honour—contracted originally, it must be remembered, between members of their own body—and debts of other kinds contracted with the herd of dependents who surrounded them. Their religious scrupulousness in regard to the former (so

essential to their cohesion as a body) was in striking contrast to their contemptuous disregard of the latter. This distinction was, as usual, accepted by society as the correct version of the moral law, and, until very recently, the suspicion that a man was deeply indebted to his tutor ruled a strong presumption in favour of his gentility, while its careless denial gave him that *distingu'air* which characterizes those who have mixed in the best society.

In democracies where men are born free and equal, education is universal, but with us, so deeply are the middle classes imbued with the idea that the lower orders as a body, exist for their convenience and comfort, that from them proceeded, as Professor Huxley remarked at the time, the strongest opposition that the advocates of the Board Schools had to encounter. They asked, with consternation, Where are we to get our servants, if the people are to be educated? And, while boasting of the institutions of a country which permitted a handful of their own number to creep into the ranks of the aristocracy, did their utmost to stay the hands of those philanthropic men who were endeavouring to raise the heads of the people above the slough of ignorance in which they were drowning. And thus it is. Carrying into action the principles which we have imbibed from the aristocracy, we first of all, be it observed, keep the people in ignorance and then make their ignorance a ground of exclusion, we set the stamp of flunkeyism on their foreheads, and then treat them as slaves, like libertines who having first subdued and then debauched their victims, turn on them on the first provocation, and defame them as prostitutes.

In democracies, society is based on the idea that men take rank in public estimation according to their talents and virtue. If the mediocrity finds himself in the highest position, it is owing to the exigencies of party politics. If the *charlatan* creeps into the people's favour, it is because, in the present state of civilization, the counterfeit is still mistaken for the genuine, if wealth is most sought after, it is because, in a

industrial age, it is, perhaps, the fairest general index of energy, perseverance, judgment, and force of character. But, in England, where the aristocracy, according to Lord Beaconsfield, 'do not read,' men of culture are regarded by the vulgar million with indifference, or even with contempt. The literary men themselves, having drunk of the polluted stream, have become infected; and the *Times*, while speaking with respect of the return of some well-fed alderman, has been known to thank God when political thinkers of the highest eminence have been rejected at the polls. In the most influential city in America, the men of genius of the nation are also the leaders in society; and men of wealth, to gain and maintain their footing, are obliged to keep themselves abreast with the highest and latest literature, science, and philosophy. But, in England, where the fox-hunting squires take precedence, men of culture feel and accept their inferiority; and one of the literary guild, who has seen much of his professional brethren, declares, with amusing exaggeration, that while they are impudent to the verge of insolence in their anonymous contributions to the Press, they will grovel in private life before even a curate, a sub-lieutenant, or briefless barrister.

In democracies, literary men are appointed to the highest posts in the diplomatic service, and usually fill them with honour and distinction; but in England, where these positions are reserved by the aristocracy for men of their own order, the Press, which in this matter fairly represents the average public sentiment, dismisses the idea of any such appointments as absurd, and quite beneath the dignity of the nation. So true is it that whatever class of persons a people places at the top of society will become the ideal of that people; and, in the long run, in my opinion, will determine its rank in the scale of nations.

Even in its amusements, the nation follows the moral dictum of the aristocracy as humbly as if it were the voice of a Pope speaking *ex cathedrâ*. When the aristocracy patronized the

cock-pit and prize-ring, these sports were considered innocent diversions; when they ceased to do so, they became positively immoral, and a mark of vulgarity and lowness of mind. But they still hunt their foxes to the death, I observe, with the sympathy and admiration of society; while, like attorneys conscious of a weak cause, or sovereigns declining in their people's favour, they divert the vulgar moralist by heading the crusade against scientific vivisection.

In democracies, the virtue of woman is most jealously guarded, and any insult offered to it is most sternly avenged, both by law and public opinion; but, until very recently, in England, the seduction of a seamstress or tradesman's daughter by a man of fashion, was regarded by society as a peccadillo, and even now is barely extenuated. One still hears of persons who regard the relation as an honour to the victim, as one still meets with old-fashioned valets who consider it an honour to be kicked by a gentleman of birth. Some years ago, during a celebrated trial, one of the witnesses, in reply to a question by the judge, said that he considered the criminality of seduction depended on the social status of the person seduced. Consider the stench and pestilential miasma that must have arisen like an exhalation from society, before so concentrated an abomination could be precipitated in one small brain, and be held there as an article of faith.

And lastly, in democracies, all men are considered as spiritually and morally equal, in virtue of the deep identity of nature that underlies and levels all the superficial differences of sentiment, opinion, or culture; but, in England, rank and birth are, like Fate, supreme over all the gods—over intellect, over virtue, over the soul of man, over the laws of God Himself. 'Depend upon it,' said a French lady of the old *regime*, 'God Almighty thinks twice before He damns a person of quality.'

These broad contrasts, owing to the pictures of society which they suggest, exhibit more clearly than any exposition,

the spirit and tendency of Aristocracy, and its effects on the national morality. And here it may be well to pause for a moment, to consider the two codes of morality which these contrasts illustrate and bring into prominence. The first code is founded on the deep intuition in the heart of man that all men have equal rights, in virtue of a common humanity. Its sphere of operation, accordingly, embraces every tribe and nation, and is co-extensive with the human race. Its precepts are embodied in what are called the universal laws of justice—the Ten Commandments, the duty of doing to others as you would be done by, and the Christian precept of loving and reverencing your neighbour. The second code is founded on the more narrow and superficial relations of classes of men—lords and serfs, masters and slaves, and the intermediate gradations of rank that unite these extreme points. The one takes for granted, as you will observe, the essential equality of man, and therefore springs naturally and spontaneously in democracies; the other assumes his inequality, and is therefore characteristic of aristocracies. The one it is the end of religion to sanction, to enforce, and to propagate; the other is in antagonism to religion, and, as long as it exists, is a standing obstacle to the reception of its teachings. In England we have accepted the aristocratic code of morals; having stretched what was natural to a small and privileged class, until it has become the conscience of the nation, with the results which we have just seen. I have not forgotten, of course, the countless influences everywhere at work which mitigate, in greater or less degree, the pernicious moral effects of the aristocratic *régime*. I only remark that, in so far as they do so, they are democratic in spirit. The present state of society is, as I have said, an amalgam of two principles—the democratic and the aristocratic. Any improvement in the social morality of England to-day, over what it was fifty years ago, is due solely to the extent to which society has been interpenetrated with the democratic spirit, and not to any tendency in aristocracy to ameliorate by

time. There are those, I am aware, who urge in justification and defence of aristocracy the benefits which it conferred on society and civilization during the Middle Ages, and who ask you to admire the beautiful relation which existed between lord and serf—the lord giving protection and guidance, the serf, in return, loyalty and obedience. Now, I am quite prepared to admit that, as a stage in the evolution of European civilization, Feudalism was inevitable, and that the reciprocal interchange of services between lord and serf was not only beneficial, but was absolutely necessary to the existence of society in those rude and lawless ages; but that the *moral* relation between lord and serf was beautiful, is simply incredible. It is a dream of the historians, a fond imagination of those who love to idealize the past. Instead of regarding the serf with the reverence which was due to him as a human being, as a matter of fact the lord regarded him as little better than a beast of the field. *Individuals* may requite the loyalty and obedience of their inferiors with love and affection, but, in every age and country, *classes* of men have regarded their inferiors with secret and avowed disdain. The reverence and obedience of the child may call forth the love and affection of the parent; the interest and enthusiasm of the scholar, the esteem and gratitude of the teacher; the devotion of the soldier, the sympathy, and even tears, of the general; but, while human nature remains as it is, the obedience of the slave—as the slightest provocation or ruffle of the blood will at once make manifest—can inspire the master with nothing but contempt. The relation of superior and inferior, founded on power on the one hand and submission on the other, is fatal to all moral grandeur or magnanimity. It is when men are free and independent that they disclose the finest qualities of the mind and heart. Then it is that love and reverence spring spontaneously, like flowers, and the infinite range and subtlety of affinity and personal attraction have free and unimpeded play. I have noticed that lovers never afterwards exhibit to the same degree the beautiful iridescence of

thought and fancy, the generous and lofty enthusiasm, as when, unshackled and free, they approached each other like stars moving regally in their respective spheres. But the knot once tied, and the one—as, alas! too often happens—become the mere appendage of the other, then domination begins, and vulgarity, recrimination, and brutal caprice enter with all their train.

CHAPTER III.

DEMOCRACY—POLITICAL ILLUSIONS

IN the preceding chapter my object has been to exhibit the effects of the principle of Aristocracy on the minds and characters of men by contrasting it with the opposite principle of Democracy, the conclusion arrived at being that, while Aristocracy has a tendency to repress and degrade the human spirit, to stifle its aspirations, and cramp its expansion, Democracy, on the contrary, has a tendency to enlarge, elevate, and ennoble it. In the following chapters I desire to pursue the subject farther into detail, and, in order to bring the lights and shades more distinctly into prominence, I propose to exhibit the reverse of the shield, to show the dangers to which Democracy is liable, the diseases to which it is subject, the spots by which it is darkened or defaced and afterwards to enquire how far these are inherent in its very nature, and how far they are superficial, temporary, or accidental merely. Now, the evils imputed to Democracy, and the dangers by which it is threatened, may, perhaps, be most conveniently considered under the ordinary divisions of political, social, and moral—the dangers being mainly political, the evils and defects social and moral. And as there would be little gained by discussing the social and moral effects of a particular form of government unless we had good and sufficient grounds for believing that that form of government contained within itself the conditions essential to its own permanence and stability, I have deemed it advisable to enquire into the political dangers with which Democracy is threatened, before considering the moral and social evils to which it gives rise. Or perhaps I should rather say, danger, for to one danger alone have history and human

reason alike pointed as that to which Democracy is most exposed—the danger of despotism. That this, with the anarchy that lies on the highway to it, was the goal and grave of ancient democracies, if democracies they may be called, History is our witness; that it is the main danger to which modern democracies are exposed, abundant and weighty considerations have been adduced for believing. To the more important of these considerations, accordingly, I now desire to direct the reader's attention. But, before doing so, I think it essential, as in the preceding chapter, to divest the subject of one or two cardinal illusions by which it is obscured; and so, if possible, to exhibit clearly the real issues involved.

The first illusion is one which has so long been traded on by writers and public speakers, and has seemed so real and substantial to the general public whom these address, as to have passed into an axiom. It is interesting, not only as an illustration of the want of that power of detachment on which in a previous chapter I have insisted so strongly, but also of the uselessness, nay, the viciousness of History for guidance, unless when sternly subordinated to a controlling insight into the world of To-day. This illusion consists, in a word, in the confounding of the real and essential principle of Democracy with the various concrete and special examples of it that have existed or are now existing in the world, and of arguing as if the two things were identical; with the result that the misfortunes which befel the democracies of the ancient and mediæval worlds have been set down to the democratic principle itself, rather than to those necessities of time and place, of circumstance and condition, which, as I shall now show, had nothing whatever to do with the principle, although they were for the time being associated and bound up with it. We all know, for example, for how many generations the prosperity of the ancient republics of Greece and Rome has been adduced in justification of the belief in the superiority of the democratic over all other forms of government; or the fall that awaited

them, on the other hand, as warning against the corruption, the anarchy, and the despotism which must overtake all governments constructed on that principle. And we know, too, how all this has been and is considered, not only sound argument, but of infinitely greater weight and consequence than any so-called theoretical considerations founded on a general insight into the world and the nature of man. And yet a little reflection will show us how preposterous and futile are all such reasonings, how impotent are all such conclusions, for a just insight into the present and wise guidance for the future.

The Republic of Rome, for example, was founded on Slavery, and slavery, as is well known, was among the great causes that led to its downfall, and that largely by its effects on that tenure of land on which, in modern times, we have seen the happiness, the stability, and the prosperity of States so much depend. By enabling extensive tracts of country to be worked by slave-labour, it led directly, and with a fatal sureness, to the expropriation of the small proprietors, and the concentration of almost the entire country in the hands of a few wealthy patricians. The result was, that the people, divorced from the soil, and shut out from the vocations of modern life, were driven for refuge into the city; where, in the growing material prosperity of the empire, with little to do to fill up their time and fed at the public expense, they rapidly degenerated into a lazy and dissolute mob, and soon became a source of grave political danger. Attaching themselves in groups to the degraded retinue of haughty and insolent patricians, and mingling as partisans in their growing jealousies and dissensions, they first precipitated the civil war which brought the State to the verge of ruin, and then, becoming daily more hungry, besotted, and debased, and with no cry but for 'bread and the circus,' they at last put up the Empire periodically to auction, knocking it down to the highest bidder. So powerful a factor was slavery in the decline and fall of the Roman Republic! Even

our own day we have seen how completely the slave system in America differentiated the people of the North from the people of the South, in character, morality, modes of life, and habits of thought; how nearly it wrecked the Union by the profound antagonism of interest and sentiment which it engendered. And yet what has slavery to do with the principle of Democracy? Is it inherent in it, or essential to it? And if not, why, if slavery so largely contributed to the downfall of the Roman Republic, should modern democracies which have cast from them that curse, come to the same end?

Take again, the democracies of Greece. To what was the despotism, in which their brilliant and short-lived freedom was extinguished, due? Was it not largely owing to the direct intervention of *the whole body of the people* in every act of administration, in every important and delicate matter of domestic and foreign policy—with the anarchy and corruption attending it, and the liability, nay the certainty, of all large and popular assemblies being swayed hither and thither by gusts of passion, by envy, hatred, cupidity, vanity, jealousy, and revenge. And this interference of the People, again, in every act of administration, to what was it due? Was it not the direct and inevitable result of the small *size* of these democracies, whereby all the people could attend in person to deliberate on State affairs? But what has the mere *size* of a State to do with the principle of Democracy? If the Grecian commonwealths were small, modern commonwealths are mostly large; and public business, instead of being transacted by the people themselves in boisterous assemblies, is carried on by representatives and delegates chosen by the people, and sitting in solemn conclave. It is evident, then, that so far as the mere size of a State carries within itself, as in Greece, the seeds of its own good or evil fortune, there is no reason why the large democracies of modern times should follow the ruin of the small democracies of the ancient world.

The Republics of Greece and Rome, again, were both *war-*

life; and both aspired to and attained imperial sway over other States. That they were warlike was inevitable in that age of the world, and was a necessity inherent in their circumstance and position. At a time when boundaries were uncertain, and prescription had not yet attained the force of right, when the most civilized peoples were crowding in around the sunny shores of the Mediterranean, and, without the circle, the vast night of Barbarism lay dark and menacing, War was inevitable. And when, in the constant flux of conquest, one after another of the empires that arose went down before younger rivals, and at last Rome attained to imperial sway over the civilized world, the necessity of keeping the peace among so many hostile and tributary peoples, and of protecting the provinces of the Empire from rapacity and spoliation, together with the impossibility of continuing to leave interests so vast and complicated to the selfishness, cupidity, and unscrupulousness of a small body of jealous and rapacious patricians, necessitated the placing of the Supreme power of the State in a single despotic hand; and, indeed, must in time have compelled such a deposition of power had the Rubicon never been crossed. But if ancient republics fell thus into despotism, because they were warlike and imperial, is that any reason for believing that the same end must overtake modern democracies, which every day are becoming more peaceful and unaggressive?

If we come down to modern times, and examine that standing example of the anarchy and despotism to which democracies are liable—the French Republic, at the time of the First Revolution—we shall find that the reason it relapsed so soon into despotism was, not because it was a democracy, but from other accidental and quite extraneous causes. It was the centralization of the government and administration, which the old monarchy had for centuries been engaged in accomplishing, that made the success of the Revolution so easy, for, as soon as the Central Power in Paris fell, as it has since so often done by

barricades and *coup d'états*, into the hands of the revolutionists, the triumph of the Republic was assured and complete. But it was this same centralization, continued by the Republic, that made it so easy for Buonaparte to lead back the nation into despotism, when war and the position of the country—solitary, in the midst of determined and implacable foes—made it necessary again to concentrate power in a single hand. How different would it have been had France, instead of being beset by enemies on every hand, been situated like America, with no enemies, no wars, no foreign policy, no imbroglios, to withdraw her citizens from the paths of peaceful industry; if, like America, instead of her administration being centralized, it had been distributed among a large number of jealous and high-spirited local authorities, leaving only just so much power to the central authorities as was necessary for the general interests of the whole.

And thus it turns out, on examination, and when the actual facts of History are detached from the illusory phrases with which they have been covered and concealed, that the course and fate of those old republics which have for ages been the bugbears of Political Thinkers, as well as of practical politicians, and have been made to carry such a heavy and responsible load of political consequence, were not due to the *principle* of Democracy at all; but to such *circumstances* of time and place as we have seen—to such a relic of mingled caste-despotism and war as slavery; to such vicious forms of constitution as the participation of the whole body of the people in the administration, on the one hand, or the concentration of the administration (bred of despotism and leading again to despotism), on the other; and finally, to the necessities of war, which itself, again, is a necessity of time and place—of the age of the world, the diversity of interests, the indeterminateness of boundaries, the animosities bred of religious differences, and the like.

The second great illusion and bane of political speculation is

allied to the first; but is even more extensively diffused among all classes of men, and is of a much more subtle and recondite character. It distorts and glosses all our personal and individual life, but its most pernicious effects are seen in the realms of religion and politics, where, indeed, it adheres so closely to the facts which it conceals and falsifies, as to be stripped from them with the greatest difficulty. It springs from the neglect of the element of Time and is seen in the belief that the same object must always exhibit the same characteristics and produce the same effects, not taking into consideration how profoundly the essential genius and spirit of things is affected by that unseen intellectual, moral and social atmosphere in which they work and live, in which they are enveloped and by which they are interpenetrated. The youth, for example, in his pride of joyous life, with hope and ambition burning before him like a pillar of fire, shudders at the very thought of death and feels that he always must regard it with horror and aversion, not perceiving that, as the fire burns low, and age and illness dull his senses and enfeeble his powers, the functions of the soul become all subdued and attuned to the constricting compass of his hopes, and that, when death comes, it comes not rapaciously, like the plucking of the young and expanding fruit from the tenacious boughs, but softly, like the gentle fall of the autumnal leaves from the aged and drooping tree. It is this want of allowance for the element of Time, that plays such havoc with men's religious ideas. One of the most striking illustrations of this is seen in the almost universal fallacy—that because Supernaturalism, in one form or another, has always existed and played a definite part in the life of man, it will always continue to exist. I have noticed that the many estimable persons who bewail the wide spread scepticism among the cultured classes at the present time, comfort themselves with the assurance that this temporary evil cannot last, but must pass away as it has so often done before. When they remember the universal scepticism that has, like the night, or

the cultivated classes of the Roman world just before the splendid dawn of Christianity, and when they reflect that all down the course of modern European history, this same scepticism has ever and anon burst forth, like the opposite eruptions of revivalism, into periods of marked and unwonted activity, they solace themselves with the conviction that pure Religion (in which, by the way, they include all those miracles, incarnations, covenants, and 'schemes of salvation' which are so vital to the faith) will shine forth again in all its ancient splendour, to warm, vivify, and expand the hearts and souls of men. Now, the fallacy in this springs from the neglect of the element of Time. Men are in the habit of regarding the Past of the world as a succession of *ages*; and finding the same supernatural phenomena, in one form or another, repeated from age to age, they imagine that these phenomena are part of the Universal Order, and must always re-appear while man continues to exist. But the truth is, the Past of the world is not to be regarded as a succession of *ages* merely, but rather as a succession of *periods*. And, as in Geology each period contains within itself many ages of successive and allied forms of animals and plants, so each period of the world's history contains many ages of successive and allied forms of spiritual and moral phenomena. But to imagine that because supernatural phenomena—incarnations, revelations, interpositions, and the like—have reappeared in one form or another throughout the successive ages of recorded history, they will always continue to reappear, is as absurd as to imagine that, because the same forms of flora and fauna were repeated in endless variety through the whole succession of ages that made up a particular geological period, they will continue to be reproduced to all time. Now, it may, I think, be fairly asserted, that the successive ages of recorded history down to within living memory, have been enveloped and interpenetrated by an atmosphere of thought which we call the Theological; that is to say, an atmosphere in which Science was not yet believed to be fully able to account for all phenomena,

but where theological or supernatural agencies were believed to be necessary to clear out the interpretation of the more obscure or extraordinary occurrences. And accordingly, as one might indeed have known *a priori*, during the long succession of ages that went to make up this theological period, no sooner did one form of supernaturalism decay or disappear, than another spring up to take its place—Paganism, Hindooism, Brahminism, Buddhism, Paganism, Judaism, Mahommedanism, Catholicism, Protestantism. And, instead of being surprised men would have been disappointed if theological explanations had not been forthcoming to interpret all phenomena, however obscure, and if theological incarnations and Messiahs had not been at hand to rouse up hope among the down-trodden nations, or to restore the kingdom to conquered peoples. But at the present time, on the contrary, owing to the immense strides taken by Science within the last few years in the explanation and interpretation of the phenomena of the world, men of culture have at last come to believe in the accountability of all phenomena whatever by *natural* laws alone, and supernatural explanations, interpositions, or incarnations, instead of being looked for and believed in, become every day more and more discredited, those who come to announce them being more and more suspected as impostors. And thus it is, that the prevalence of supernaturalism with its revelations, incarnations, schemes of redemption and miracles, interpositions generally, during the successive ages of the Theological Period, and down almost to within living memory, gives us no assurance whatever that it will continue now that the most enlightened sections of the most advanced nations have fully entered into the Scientific Period. On the contrary, one may confidently anticipate that, among the increasing number of persons who are daily becoming more and more imbued with the spirit and the results of scientific thought, all that portion of religion which consists in supernaturalism must pass away, and that as Science spreads among the masses of the people, the old

supernaturalisms will become one by one extinct, and there will be for them no resurrection any more.

Akin to the illusion that Supernaturalism will always continue to play an important part in the world, because it has always hitherto done so, is the illusion that because morality has always rested on and been enforced by religious sanctions, it must always continue to do so, or will decline and die. Morality, it is argued, has its roots in Religion; and, when the roots are cut, the tree must needs wither. But the truth is, that instead of morality growing out of religion as its root, both religion and morality have grown, independently of each other, out of a common root, viz., the material, social, and intellectual conditions of the world. It is the same Public Opinion which, on its *intellectual* side, gives rise, as we have seen, to men's religious creeds, that, on its *material* and *social* side, gives rise to and enforces the code of morality and conduct under which they live. And when public opinion, on its intellectual side, becomes so advanced as to make religious sanctions, revelations, rewards and punishments no longer credible, and so deprives Morality of its supernatural supports, the same public opinion, on its material and social sides, will become so stringent and severe as to fully make up to morality the support it has lost. In a word, as the supernatural sanction relaxes, on the one hand, from above, the sanction of public opinion tightens, on the other, from below. It is because this, the real origin of both religion and morality, has not been understood, and the essence of each has not been *detached* from the gross associations with which it is bound up, that the question is sunk in that mingled slough of superstition, illusion, and uncertainty in which it lies to this day. So little power of detachment, indeed, is there among the great masses of men, in everything relating to the spiritual world as distinguished from the sensuous and material, that they will be found, at the end of a long life, lost in the most puerile illusions. The Turk imagines that when the Mahommedanism

which is his only sanction for morality, goes, morality will go with it, the Christian (who thinks that the Turk, poor devil, would get on all the better with his morality, if his Mahomedanism were once well out of the way) believes that when his miracles, schemes of salvation, future punishments, and justification by faith alone, become discredited, all morality must cease. Even the Mormon, the Quaker, the Shaker, feels that morality is bound up with his miserable and petty sectarian shibboleth and fights as blindly and desperately for the outermost rag of dogma, in which he has enwrapped what he calls his religious convictions, as if it were part of his very soul, not perceiving that it is the shadow cast by the existing stage of his intellectual culture, the garment in which his country, generation, or family, have clothed him—a garment which, when his intellectual stature waxes, will be thrown aside without detriment to his soul to be replaced by a new and more excellently-fitting garb than that which it has outgrown. Such illusions as these one may readily admit have a real *relative* value for the time and place in which they are prevalent, but the object of philosophy (which knows nothing of time and place, and whose function it is to overleap them) is to dissolve these foul illusions, these pleasing enchantments, and by detaching the soul and essence of the things from the gross bodies in which they are, for the time being, embedded and lodged to give them a winged life and immortality. For he who lives in illusions, and is led by them, is the slave of time and place and circumstance; but he who sees their law and essence is so far immortal and can defy them.

The above are instances of the neglect of the element of Time in the sphere of Religion, and I have introduced them in this place, although not strictly relevant with the object of making my point of view more apparent. But it is in its bearing on government and politics, that the profound influence of the different intellectual and moral atmospheres of different periods of time concerns us here, and it is to this that

I wish to direct attention. In a material and social atmosphere, in which war was the main concern of men; in an intellectual atmosphere, in which the theological interpretation of events satisfied the mind; and in a moral atmosphere, in which theological interventions, incarnations, and deliverers were the natural expectations of the heart, it is reasonable to expect a different fate for democracies from that which they might hope for in a time when peaceful industry is the main occupation of men's lives, when scientific explanations are the only explanations that will satisfy their minds, and scientific judgments and predictions the only foundation in which they will have confidence as basis for action. When the general necessities of the world, and the public opinion founded on these necessities, made it incumbent on peoples to organise themselves on a military basis, it was inevitable that society and government should constitute themselves like an army, with one individual, possessed of despotic power, at the top, and a descending hierarchy of lesser despotisms to the bottom. But when the world arrived at that stage when the necessity for a warlike organization throughout no longer existed, when war was the occasional exception, and peaceful industry the main concern of nations, the necessity for placing despotic power in the hands of one man, with its tendency to tyranny and repression, no longer existed; and democratic forms of government, as giving more room for individual liberty and expansion, had a greater chance of permanence and stability. When the general state of public feeling, again, is one of expectation, and prophets, messiahs, and deliverers are eagerly looked for, it is evident that men like Mahomet will have a greater chance of founding a despotism and perpetuating it, than they would have in an age or country where men had long ceased to believe in any such deliverers and messiahs, or the divine missions with which they professed to be charged. The doctrine of the 'divine right of kings,' for example, which is a mild and mitigated form of the more general belief in divine incarnations, had a most

potent influence in restoring the Monarchy, and bringing to an end the Commonwealth set up by Cromwell. Were the Commonwealth re-established in our day, is it likely that the belief in 'the divine right of kings' would again restore the Monarchy? There was a time—indeed, it is not yet gone by—when Religion consecrated emperors, kings, aristocracies, and castes, and so enabled them to dominate the souls as well as enslave the bodies of men. Is it likely that this shall be much longer perpetuated, now that Science has torn the illusion from such pretensions, has shown what a poor piece of imposture this distance in nature, due to differences of birth, to 'blue-blood,' and the like, is; now that it has demonstrated the native identity of the great masses of mankind of all ranks, in mind as well as in body, and has saturated the public with the belief in the equal right of all men to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness?

From the above preliminary remarks, we may fairly conclude that all general conclusions as to the fate of modern democracies, drawn from the course and termination of democracies in other ages and other intellectual and social periods of the world's history, are ridiculous, illusory, and irrelevant, and may, once for all, be thrown out to the stump orator, the demagogue, and the belated 'practical politician.'

But, although no arguments drawn from the fate of ancient democracies have any relevancy when applied to the democracies of the present day, there are, nevertheless, certain dangers inherent in the structure of modern democracies, and believed by many to be inseparable from the very nature of Democracy itself; and to these I now invite the reader's attention.

CHAPTER IV.

DEMOCRACY—POLITICAL DANGERS.

THE first danger, believed by many to be inherent in the structure of democracies, and to which I desire to direct the reader's attention, is the danger of Despotism, owing to the absence of an independent Nobility to stand between the People and the Central Power.

It has often been remarked, that, of all European States, England is the one where personal and political liberty have for the longest time been enjoyed, and where they seem to rest on the most secure and solid foundation. While all those European States which are constructed on the democratic principle, have time and again been rocked and overturned by revolution, England, with her mixed constitution, has weathered the storms of centuries, and preserved her essential liberties throughout. And, as a record of her history would seem to show that these liberties, often threatened, have been, more than once, saved by the intervention of a powerful and independent hereditary Nobility, standing as a buffer between the Crown and the People, and able at once to defend its own liberties, and to protect those of the People when attempts have been made to over-ride them, a political generalization has been promulgated and widely accepted, to the effect that Democracy, as a principle of government, can have no stability, but must fall into despotism, owing to the absence of this hereditary Nobility as a defence against the encroachments of the Central Power. This view not only finds favour with those who by interest, tradition, or personal taste dislike democracies almost as much as despotism itself, but has commended itself to many able and disinterested political

thinkers. But, as I believe it to be at once shallow and pernicious, I shall endeavour to show, not only that it is not the natural function of aristocracies to stand as a buffer between the Crown and the People, but that in those rare and exceptional instances where, for special reasons, they have been instrumental in preserving popular liberties, it has not been because they were aristocracies, but for quite other and independent reasons.

To begin with it is incredible, on *a priori* grounds alone, that an aristocracy founded on land and inheriting the traditions of feudal times, should espouse the cause of People against that of Kings. Dependent on Kings for their honours and dignities, and holding their titles, jurisdictions, and possessions only on condition of swearing fealty to their lords, it is incredible that they should stand apart from those to whom they are so intimately united by every tie of interest, sympathy, tradition and personal relationship. It is true that, in times of disputed succession the aristocracy have in the past held in their hands the power of making and unmaking Kings. It is true, too, that when their own liberties as well as those of the People have been endangered by ambitious or unscrupulous rulers, they have been mainly instrumental in deposing the rulers. But that their normal attitude has been one of alliance with the Kings in keeping the People in political and personal subjection the pages of history bear witness. For although they turned our James II off the throne when he became too high-handed and despotic, it must not be forgotten that, as a body, they sided with the attempts of Charles I on the people's liberties, and brought back the Stuarts after the death of Cromwell to commence again that career of despotism and shame, which continued until they were driven from the land.

But if, in England, and under special and exceptional circumstances the Nobility in entreaching themselves against the encroachments of the Monarchy, have formed a barrier behind which the People also have protected themselves, it has

not been so in other countries. In France, for example, before the First Revolution, the Government was one vast centralization, and the King was practically as despotic as was Louis XIV. himself. The aristocracy, although possessed of enormous legal and social privileges, had no share in the government, and did not, and could not, mitigate in the least the central despotism. On the contrary, protected by the King in their social privileges and legal exemptions, they abetted him in his oppression of the People, and when the Monarchy fell, they fell with it, more execrated than the King himself. And just as the Republic that succeeded the Monarchy, fell back again into despotism, not because there was no aristocracy, but because the administration still remained completely *centralized*, so, too, England has preserved her liberties through so many long centuries, not because she had an independent hereditary nobility, but because the administration was thoroughly *decentralized*. It was as the heads of the various local governments, that the aristocracy helped to preserve the liberties of England, and not as an aristocracy as such. From time immemorial, the great land-owners of the different counties have had the local government of these counties in their own hands, and for many ages, they were supported in their office by the allegiance of their vassals and tenants. And, although the king has always nominally appointed to these high offices, the selection has really always been made from the local nobility and gentry ; so that he could only have centralized the entire government of the country in his own hands, by stripping the aristocracy of privileges and powers, which they had always enjoyed, which they regarded as theirs by right, and of which they were exceedingly jealous and tenacious. But if the stability of English liberties has been owing, not to the possession of an aristocracy as such, but to a well-developed system of local self-government, there is no reason why, in the altered conditions of the present day, a democracy constructed on the same general

lines, should not be equally stable. As a matter of fact the constitution of the United States of America is founded on the same general lines and has practically the same defences against tyranny. The different States of the Union correspond to our different counties, the State legislatures (independent of the Central Government in everything except the most general concerns), to the old aristocratic rule in the counties—a rule by the way, which, under the conditions of feudal society, was the only one practicable or possible. The sentiments in both cases, which make these local governments real and effective centres of resistance to the encroachments of the Central Government although different in their nature are alike in their strength and tenacity. On the one hand, you have the blind and unreasoning, though real and genuine feeling of reverence, loyalty, and adhesion to the Aristocracy as a body—a feeling now so sadly waning—on the other, you have the high spirited pride of a free and enlightened people—a people who have always managed their own affairs and who resent as an insult the intrusion of any foreign or outside interference. But it is questionable whether, at any period of English history, the great nobility of the counties could have taken their vassals and dependents with them against the Crown to anything like the extent to which the different States of the South took their peoples at the time of the Civil War. So far, indeed, did this go, that when a State declared that it went out of the Union, the people went with it to a man even those who would gladly have averted the final rupture.

And thus it would seem, when analyzed that the real defence of States against despotism lies not in the existence of an independent Aristocracy, as such but in the existence of local governing bodies as centres of resistance—whether it be the organization of counties around a feudal aristocracy to whom the people are bound by a spontaneous hereditary loyalty and attachment or the organization of States around

local legislatures chosen by the people and representing their interests, sentiments, and opinions.

It is urged, again, that in democracies, where the great body of the people are all about alike in education and position; where society, in consequence, shows like a vast undiversified plain, a vast aggregate of units, imposing in the mass, but individually insignificant; and where there is no special class with sufficient prestige, authority, and material resources to resist any wide-spread popular movement; it is impossible to find a point of resistance against the selfish or ambitious designs of the man who, by his success in war, his public services or personal prestige, has impressed himself on the popular imagination. That the history of modern France, and more especially the career of the Buonapartes, lends plausibility to this view no one, I think, can deny. But if we take America as the most typical example of modern democracy, and her constitution as the best existing representative of its essential spirit, we shall see, on comparing her with France, how small is the danger to the democracies of the future, from the side of despotism, and how real and potent are the checks and influences already at work to prevent it. At the time of the first Buonaparte, France had just emerged from the despotism of centuries, the masses of the people were sunk in ignorance, and their sentiments and habits of thought were still imbued with the traditions of the older *régime*; at the time of the second Buonaparte, their imaginations were still vaguely filled with the memories of the brilliant career of the first Emperor and the glory he brought to France; and in both cases the administration was completely centralized, and the country surrounded on all hands by jealous and watchful enemies. In America, on the contrary, the people have been from the first high-spirited, intelligent, and free; they have inherited the traditions of independence bound up with the origin and progress of the Republic, and are imbued with a hatred of kings and other outworn feudal forms, imbibed from

parents expatriated from their native lands. All this, working in the minds of men in whose memories the sting of ancient tyranny and social degradation still lingers, makes the equality, freedom, and erectness of mind which they now enjoy, a jewel beyond all price. In a word, all the habits, interests, traditions, and sentiments of the great masses of the people, all their pride, vanity, and self-love, are linked to that democracy in which alone they feel they can walk erect and independent, units of separate and individual consequence, no longer, as in the old lands from which they came, to be lumped together as the miscellaneous and indiscriminate herd. So strong, indeed, are these sentiments that they would, of themselves, oppose a most obstinate barrier to the advent and encroachments of despotism. Not that despotisms have never crept in under a love of liberty and equality as intense, and a hatred of tyranny as strong. In Rome the Emperors, who dared not assume the hated title of king, were able, by the cheap expedient of retuning the old republican offices and forms, but centring them all in themselves, to inaugurate a tyranny which became every day more harsh, grinding, and undisguised. But then, as we have seen, the Roman plebs had become by that time a miserable rabble, whose souls could be bought for a largess of corn; while the patricians, who ought, according to the modern opponents of Democracy, to have been the bulwark of liberty, were, by reason of their dissensions, jealousies, corruptions, and extortions, the means of precipitating the despotism of the Empire. Besides, the necessity of the State was war; her glory, the extension of her dominion. Honour was bound up with fighting, and not with the arts of peace. The spirit of the age commended the soldier, the conqueror; superstition threw a divine halo around the head of the ruler, and made his person sacred. The administration was centralized, local self-government was unknown, and the people, although having a veto on several important matters of policy, had no initiative, and little or no share in the administration. Under

these circumstances, that Rome, in spite of her hatred of kings and her love of republican forms, should fall into despotism, was inevitable.

But America has other defences against despotism besides her high spirit of freedom, her ardour for equality, her equal arena for talent, her local self-government, her immunity from war, her love of peaceful industry. She has the power of Association—a still more potent defence. It is true, that the people, although powerful in the mass, are insignificant as individuals, and cannot be expected to make the same stand against the inroads of the ‘one man power’ as the great nobility in old feudal countries. But, by the power of association, they can give to their united wants and opinions the weight and momentum of a single will. How potent a factor, indeed, this facility of association may be where the individual is weak, can be seen among ourselves. In no country in Europe, perhaps, has the individual working-man as little social, intellectual, and political power and importance as in England. And yet, when he meets in monster associations to make his opinions and wants heard, no section of the community carries more political weight.

The power of association, again, is vastly enhanced by the increased facility of communication which the great inventions of the steam-engine and telegraph have effected in the present century; whereby the whole country is converted into a vast auditorium in which the people can be addressed as one man, and can be made to keep pace in open day with the secret and underground machinations of the Central Power.

But, besides this power of association as a defence against the encroachments of despotism, the Americans have the education and political insight necessary to make their aims and wants clear and definite, as well as that energy, resource, and habit of doing things for themselves so necessary to give effect to their desires. How fine is their political insight and sagacity may be seen in the great political constitution con-

structed and bequeathed to them by their forefathers, with its splendid symmetry, and balanced and harmonious adjustment of its various parts. How easily they can do what in old countries can only be done by trained specialists, was seen in the great Civil War, where they extemporised, and quickly brought to a working perfection (to meet the sudden emergency), commanders, officers, commissariat, and all the appurtenances of war, with little or no previous practical experience. And how entirely does this give the lie to that poor and cheap illusion, bred of pride and prejudice, so prevalent among ourselves—that only those born in the official ranks can be safely entrusted with the management of great affairs; as if the average man of any class was not as capable as the average man of any other, provided only education and opportunity were afforded him.

But, besides the above defences against despotism, there is the great fact that, in America, the legislator, the statesman, the politician, is of much less importance and consequence than in the old countries of Europe. Where the people are all as a body intelligent, and know their own interests better than anyone else can teach them, politics, as such, become relegated to inferior minds, and the politician takes an inferior position, as, indeed, in all healthy states he must do, from the nature of his work, as dealing with the grosser, more obvious, and less subtle elements of life—*income-tax*, *land question*, *factory acts*, *cattle diseases*, *merchant shipping*, *scientific frontiers*, and the like. In countries like America, where there is no great political question to call forth the best talent in the country; where there is no burning moral iniquity, like slavery, to fire the nobler spirits, where there is no aristocracy monopolising the great offices of state, and so making politics an ideal and object of ambition as a ladder to social position; there is less temptation to the citizen to attempt by a *coup d'état* to fetch the people's liberties. The pure is more of a great value to induce men to risk the dangers of the attempt; and as there

is no standing army, of any consequence, and the soldier is recruited from the citizen and brings with him the pride and traditions of freedom, there is no instrument at hand that can be depended on to execute these nefarious designs. Besides, there is that general spirit of the age and time which permeates men's ideas like an atmosphere, that amelioration of life and manners which would forbid the thought in its inception, and which, as time goes on, must make such designs more and more alien to the minds of men, more foreign to their nature and inclinations. And, lastly, there is the steady advance of Democracy in all the civilized nations of the world, the increasing sympathy with its spirit, and reconciliation with its aims (if not with its name), which, with every decade, must make the return to despotism, among free peoples, a danger more and more remote, and which must heap on anyone attempting to establish it more and more execration.

But it is urged, again, that in democracies, where material prosperity is the ideal of the great masses, and where money-making is the most keen and absorbing pursuit, the man at the head of affairs who will give the people the largest opportunities for making money, and the strongest securities for keeping it when made, will have little difficulty in wheedling them out of their political liberties. It is argued that, as each man is independent of all *class* ties, and has his centre of action in himself alone, he will part willingly with political rights, which, after all, to him, are merely abstract and of little value, if the only liberty which he considers at all real and solid—the liberty to make money unimpeded—is conceded to him in full measure. Now, in the old feudal countries of Europe, where the masses feel themselves shut out from all liberal pursuits, where they are accustomed to be physically and morally kicked from youth to age, and where they touch their hats and take ‘tips’ in token of their base degree, that men should ask for nothing but to be allowed to grovel and make money, I can well believe. But in democracies like America, where men feel themselves born to

the highest positions to which their ability and character can carry them, and where a personal indignity is resented as a stain that they should sell their birthrights for a mess of pottage, is incredible. For, in the old countries, the superincumbent weight of the upper classes of the social hierarchy so presses on the classes at the bottom, that, both from social exclusion and want of education, they feel themselves shut out from all great affairs and positions of natural dignity, and are thrown back on money-making as the only means of securing their own independence and erectness of mind. But in America, the laws and customs of the people give to each man, as a free gift, that natural erectness and independence, which only the better classes in aristocratic countries enjoy; and the consequence is, that money, although highly prized and hotly pursued for its collateral advantages, for the comfort, consideration, and power which it confers on its possessor, is not needed for the main end and would be sacrificed at once if that were endangered. It is true, that when a State is threatened by foes from without and within, and when in consequence industry becomes paralyzed, credit weakened and men's material prosperity seriously endangered, a despotism, which shall quell all faction, resist all foreign aggression, and so give stability, confidence, and security to life and property will, for a time, be gladly welcomed. But then, the very existence and presence of such enemies and factions only shows that the State is not as yet ripe for an enduring democratic form of government. So long as the French Republic had to contend against the intrigues of factions within and the aggressive designs of territory-absorbing powers without, so long would a Gambetta have been incompetent. So long as it is to the material interest of the great bulk of the German people that the German Empire should be united and strong, so long will a Bismarck be all powerful. But to imagine that either a Bismarck, a Gambetta, or a Napoleon even, were they debased to twice the dull, selfish struggle to retain absolute power in a perpetual struggle against the

enemies without or factions within, and more especially in an age when theories of 'divine right' are quickly mouldering on their dusty shelves, is a dream of the *doctrinaire*. For there is this immense difference between the form of government that best suits times of war, foreign or domestic, and times of industry and peace—in times of war, the danger is common to all the citizens alike, their interests, in consequence, are one, and the situation demands that supreme power be placed in the hands of one man; in times of peace, on the contrary, and under the present conditions of industry and commerce, with its minute subdivision of labour, society splits itself into a natural *antagonism* of interests, strike it on which side you please—an antagonism between master and workman, employer and employed, town and country, manufacturers and agriculturalists, buyer and seller, those who have and those who have not. And as Government exists primarily to represent the *material* interests of men, the form of Government required is one that shall reflect this natural antagonism; and this we see modern nations have unconsciously felt and worked out in the institution and organization of parties, each with its natural leader. It would be obviously impossible for any one man to represent in his single person all interests at once, for in defending the interests of one class of the people, he would be forfeiting the support of the other. And even should he succeed, by corruption, in getting the supreme power into his hands for a time, the same self-interest and love of money, which, by the hypothesis, led men to place him at the head of affairs in the first instance, would soon be at work to depose him again, unless, indeed, he kept himself in power by an army, in which case he would have converted the government into an armed despotism, a condition of things becoming every day more and more impossible.

But although democracies in modern times have less and less reason to fear despotism from the encroachments of the Central Government on local liberties, I must not omit to mention, in

passing, a danger which has recently sprung up in America, and which is becoming to many a source of grave anxiety—I mean the danger to liberty from the growing power gained by individuals over the central government, by means of the Local Legislatures. I have already said that the separate States of the Union are independent of the central government in everything except those most general concerns which affect the interest of the country as a whole. But it so happens, that the local legislatures of these separate States have the appointment of the members who shall represent them in the Senate of the United States. And as this Senate shares with Congress and President the legislative and executive powers of the country, it is evident, that any person or body of persons who shall attain control over the local legislatures of the several States, must indirectly exercise great influence over the general Government of the country. Now, this is precisely what has occurred. A few railway-kings, as they are called, have succeeded in getting into their own hands the control of the whole vast railway system of the continent. And as these railways are monopolies, and most of them run through several different States, the men who control them are able, by bribery and corruption on the one hand, and by intimidation and the playing off of one State against another (on the old principle of *'divide et impera'*) on the other, not only to practically control the local legislatures, but to indirectly exercise a vast influence over the central government itself, and thus to become a standing menace to liberty; so that, whereas the danger to democracies formerly was the direct absorption of local rights and freedom by the central power, the danger now is the indirect control of the central power by a few individuals through the medium of the local governments. And yet although this is a real detriment to the highest interest of States, and has a most pernicious influence on public morals, it cannot, I think, be really regarded as a serious political danger. In the first place, these monopolies exist by the consent of the

People, and whatever power they may exercise over the local legislatures is by the allowance and indifference of the People. One breath of suspicion or fear, one obstacle placed in the path of the public will, and the monopolists and their monopolies would be swept into the night; for it is incredible that a people which was able to put down the armed power of the whole South should be baffled or seriously disturbed by a handful of individuals.

Another danger charged against democracies, is their tendency to fall into anarchy, and thence into despotism, through the weakness and want of firmness and steadiness of the central Executive Power. It is quite conceivable that the various sections of public opinion in any country may be so nearly equal, and the different interests, sentiments, and prejudices of the people so antagonistic, as to render it impossible for any one section to command a majority sufficient to inaugurate a firm and consistent policy, or even, under certain circumstances, to keep the peace. One can easily imagine, that were the affairs of the German Empire, for example, to be taken out of the hands of the Emperor and Chancellor, and given over to the representatives of the People, the opposition of interests, ideas, and sentiments, between Church and State, Catholic and Protestant, Socialist, Anarchist, and Reactionary, would become so acute as to make government impossible, except through hollow and transient combinations among the various groups, without sincerity, unity, or force; and further, that were these groups so nearly equal as to throw into the hands of the Socialists, for example, the balance of power, the Executive would be so weak, and its tenure so precarious, that socialistic disturbances, from want of power to deal with them firmly, might become a serious menace to public order. In France, too, one can easily imagine the Legitimists, Orleanists, Buonapartists, Republicans, and Socialists, so nearly balanced, as to make the Ministry formed from any particular section powerless, and their following so factious and unscrupulous, that the slightest breath of suspicion, the

slightest menace of foreign aggression, must necessitate a despotism. These are, of course, hypothetical suppositions merely, but they are sufficiently realisable to show that not all countries, as some *doctrinaires* seem to imagine, can be fitted with a democratic constitution, but only those where the conditions are ripe and favourable. They show, also, how difficult it is to engraft a democratic form of Government on those old feudal States, where so many of the old world elements—Catholicism, Militarism, Caste-Despotism, and the like—still mingle with the new elements of Science, Industry, and Peace. On the other hand, again, even in England, it was most instructive and interesting to note how the first soft approach of despotism was heralded by the closure, when a handful of men deprecating of justice for their country, and driven to desperation by the oppression and extortions of centuries, took advantage of the ancient and honourable rules of a free assembly, to obstruct public business and clog the wheels of government. And one might go farther and predict, that should such obstruction be persisted in, and should the great landlords (brought to bay by an attack all along the line on their dearest interests and privileges), abet and assist in the work of obstruction, still further pressure will have to be applied the closure will have to be made more stringent, and, in a word just so much despotism will have to be fastened on the neck of liberty as will suffice to restrain its license, and enable the government to surmount the obstacles thrown in its way. In truth there is no Constitution in the world so free, but, by the violence and unscrupulousness of faction could, in an incredibly short time especially in the presence of external dangers, be wrecked and reduced to despotism. Even in America that sacred abode of freedom, the exasperation of the Southern States on the question of Slavery, and their determination to put out that which so profoundly affected their real interests, to the peaceful decay of constitutional maxims, is already throwing the country into that worst form of anarchy—

civil war—but, for the time being, put more power into the hands of the President than has ever been entrusted to him before or since. And had the South remained unconquered, and the war become chronic, a real, if not nominal, despotism must gradually have been established. But admitting the tendency of democracies to anarchy except when the conditions are propitious, the remedy, on the other hand, becomes every day more available; and consists in the gradual amelioration of the material conditions of men, the cessation of international jealousies and religious fanaticisms, the fixedness of boundaries and States, the settlement of disputed territories, and the gradual inauguration of the reign of science, industry, and the arts of peace.

CHAPTER V.

DEMOCRACY—THE DEMAGOGUE.

PERHAPS the most prevalent fear among the opponents of Democracy is the fear of the Demagogue, with all the obnoxious associations aroused by his name. Now, it must be admitted that there is good reason for this feeling, not only on account of the low general culture of the masses but also because of certain tendencies in the nature of man himself. And although it is chiefly when the great body of the people are admitted to a preponderant power in the government of a country, that the political, social, and intellectual illusions with which they are saturated become a source of real political concern, there is, nevertheless, at all times more or less reason for anxiety, owing to the liability of educated and illiterate alike to certain illusions and false ideals which lie dangerously near the political arena, and which, like beauty in man or woman, compel admiration and belief, even after being over and over again convicted of inadequacy, falsehood, and imposture.

Among these, the most deep rooted, perennial, and tenacious is the belief in the orator, in the man of brilliant and eloquent speech. It is part of the Law of Compensation, perhaps, but, nevertheless, is none the less unfortunate, that many of the deepest, most fertile, and most penetrating thinkers are, from some deficiency in the media of communication some want of fluidity or spontaneity, incapable of fluency or eloquence. They can never, in consequence, reach the masses, their sphere is limited to books, and their power can be exercised only over a literary individuality among the cultured and refined. But where is man to be found who can reach the multitude, who can set free the imprisoned feelings and false notions

beliefs of great assemblies, and by rich and brilliant speech can give to these beliefs dignity, respectability, and expansion, attaching the contracted and often selfish interests and sentiments of his hearers to wider ranges of thought and feeling, and so opening up to them distance and horizon, there is no limit to the admiration which he inspires. This admiration is, no doubt, both just and natural, but unhappily it does not stop there; but, by an intellectual illusion, goes on to a whole-souled belief and confidence in the unlimited capacity of the orator in every department of life. For it is one of the most insidious and unconscious, but deep-rooted, illusions of the human mind, to ascribe a fulness, roundness, and completeness of nature to those who have touched our hearts and imaginations with admiration and love; to invest the whole figure with the symmetry and proportion which has delighted us in the single member. Unless, therefore, we are on our guard, we naturally believe that the man who has so completely filled up our ideal, so freely unlocked our imprisoned thoughts, and who so far excels us at that particular angle where perhaps we are most conscious of our own limitations, has a general and all-round superiority of nature and powers. And yet nothing can be more illusory or pernicious, for there is little more reason in nature or in fact to expect from the orator intellectual capacity proportioned to his power of speech, than to expect from the juggler or rope-dancer intellectual power proportioned to his skill in his art. It is owing to this illusion that we have the political and pulpit orator bearing away the palm from the deep but speech-bound theologian and philosopher, and (as the poll is taken by a count of heads) exalted to a position of greater rank, influence, and authority. It is true that this is not the case in literature and art, but there are special reasons for their exemption. In the first place, society is not organized around literature and art as it is around government and religion. Religion and government are the heart and core of society, while literature and art are its fringe and adornment

merely. The status and authority which, in religion and government, are given by the great body of the people, are conferred in literature and art by a small section of experts only. In literature and art, only the cultivated classes have a voice and are represented, in the court which sits on each man's title to fame. The result is, that great authors, artists, and musicians, although more or less *carriere* to the general, take rank largely according to their real deserts. But in politics and religion, where the decision rests with men who read their bibles as if biblical criticism had no existence, and their newspapers as if laws of Political Economy were unknown, and who rise from the perusal thinking they can see into a mill-stone as far as another, the popular preacher who embodies their delusions, and the political orator who reflects their ignorance and complacency, carry it over the heads of the great divine, and the wise and far-reaching thinker.

Now, it is in democracies that the evils flowing from this cardinal and wide-spread illusion are most apparent, and the reign of the Demagogue is most to be apprehended. In despotisms, where small councils are entrusted with the management of affairs and where the people have no share in the government, oratory, as such, is not required, attention is concentrated on public business, on the wisdom and expediency of political designs, and the best means of compassing them. The man most wanted, accordingly, is the man of insight, reliant, strong, and determined, gifted with tact, diplomacy, and fertility of resource, and such men were Richelieu and Mazarin. In aristocratic and plutocratic governments, again, where the upper and middle sections of the people are represented in large constitutional assemblies, the power of speech begins to make itself felt, but it is of a different order from that most esteemed in pure democracies. It consists rather in vigorous debating power than in eloquent harangues, in shifful arguments addressed to the reason and understanding, in the rapid, brilliant, and forcible

presentation of facts and illustrations saturated in a medium of sarcasm, invective, and refined personality, rather than in stirring appeals to the sentiments and passions; and in such an assembly Cicero could find scope and appreciation for his unrivalled powers, while the Roman constitution still remained intact and the Roman Senate still retained the supreme direction of public affairs. So, too, Beaconsfield retained his ascendancy in the aristocratic and plutocratic assemblies of England. But, in full-blown democracies, and especially where the People are to be reached through large public assemblies, what is wanted is not so much vigorous debating power and appeals to the reason, as eloquent declamation, lively personalities, and appeals to the interests, sentiments, and passions. If in despotisms and in small secret cabinets attention is concentrated on the wisdom, feasibility, or practicability of the end in view, and on the choice of means, instruments, and occasions for attaining it; in the popular assemblies of democracies, the expediency of ends and the choice of means is more or less ignored, and the interest is centred on the personal, the sentimental, the ideal. What the People want to hear is not the details of plans which they cannot comprehend; or of means and instruments of which they can have but little knowledge; but rather the motives, the intentions, the upshot of the business in hand, and the result, in so far as it will affect their own feelings, interests, or passions. They demand from the orator that he shall discourse to them on such issues, for example, as whether General Gordon is to be left to his fate; whether Englishmen are to allow themselves to be bullied on the Egyptian question by frog-eating Frenchmen; whether the hated Saxon is to continue to squat on Ireland for ever; how long the people are to be defrauded of their rights by a 'bloated' aristocracy, and the like. And the man who, by his power of speech, shall best embody the interests, passions, and sentiments which are involved in such questions as these, and who shall give them the most varied, vigorous, passionate. and

brilliant expression, is the man who of all others will be borne to power by the democracy, as was the case with Mirabeau, Danton, and Robespierre in France at the time of the Revolution, with O'Connell in Ireland and Gambetta in France in recent years, and, perhaps, to a certain extent, with Bright in England.

I for some years I was in the habit of frequenting the rooms of an old debating society in a central part of London, with the view, if possible, of determining in a scientific way the impressions made on a miscellaneous audience by various forms of thought and speech. These rooms were as well adapted for this purpose as any that could be found, and furnished a mirror and epitome of public opinion not only by reason of the motley and ever changing character of the audience, but from the variety of thought, culture, and style of the various speaker. The society was an old one, and had held its debates night after night from a period beyond living memory. The subjects for discussion were usually the ordinary political and social topics of the hour, varied, on rare occasions, by light excursions into the region of religion, science and philosophy. All sides of the political world were fairly represented, and if on one evening the Liberal, Radical, or Irish element in the room preponderated, on another, perhaps, the balance would incline to the High Tory or Conservative side. No restraint was put on the free expression of opinion, whether of applause or censure, so that the effect produced by the style, thought, or personality of the different speakers could be easily seen. The audience, too, was well adapted for purposes of observation, the circulation of fresh blood being constantly kept up, for besides the old *habitués* who were a kind of constant quantity in the room, every evening brought a fair contingent of casuals — passer by who happened to read the subject of debate on the window outside and were attracted by curiosity to see what was going on, strangers from the country devious merely of passing away the evening, or foreigners from various parts

interested in politics and debate. The *personnel* of the room, too, was sufficiently varied and picturesque. Besides the ordinary Englishman of the middle class, who formed perhaps the staple of the meeting, there were to be seen in these rooms young barristers from the Temple, glowing with political or professional ambition, and come to cultivate the invaluable art of public speaking; hacks of the Press, broken-down *littérateurs*, seedy Bohemians, with their coats out at elbow, and driven to the wall by dissipation, who had dropped in to end the day over their pipes and punch, and who every now and then interrupted the debate by their confused, incoherent, or maudlin ejaculations; superior Working-men, with hair thrown back to bring out the intellect, who had gained praise and distinction, perhaps, among their own class in some local debating club in the suburbs, and who (although modestly deprecating their want of classical education) evidently rated themselves accordingly, and had come down to this central hall to try their prowess with the old veterans of debate. There, too, were to be seen the Secularists, fed on Volney's *Ruins of Empires* and Paine's *Age of Reason*, who, with affected moderation of tone and studied reference to authorities, were prepared to demonstrate against all comers that kings and priests were the standing disgrace of the world, the long unmitigated curse of every nation and every age; brilliant young adventurers from Ireland, fresh from college and without any definite profession, who had come to London to push their fortunes, and were full of eloquence, fervour, and bright ingenuity; faded old book-worms, moths of the British Museum, who had come out quietly at night to this well-lit hall from its dusky recesses, where for years they had been collecting evidence to show that Julius Cæsar never existed, and that the ancient historians were impudent and unblushing forgeries of the Middle Ages; all these were to be found here in this old hall on one or other evening, in hot but genial debate, and, with suffused and fiery-eyed demagogues screaming with excitement, Fenians, Socialists,

and Red Republicans, threatening the general overturn of society without apology or disguise, old bachelors, city clerks, half-pay captains, High Church curates and occasionally some man well known in public life, come down to open a debate on the stirring question of the hour, made up as interesting and diversified an assemblage of characters as could well have been brought together. With an audience so varied, so shifting, and so rapid changing in its composition, with debate untrammelled, and no restraint put upon a fair expression of feeling or opinion whether of applause or censure the conditions needed for the observation of the effects of different forms and types of eloquence were peculiarly favourable. Not, indeed, was the speaking less varied than the character and composition of the audience, but ranged through all stages of the good, bad and indifferent. The most persistent and fatal type perhaps, was the Bore—the old and well-seasoned bore—with good matter often, and sometimes ideas, but costive and speech-bound in utterance, whom nothing could kill or repress, who would wrestle with a platitude all night without remorse, and whose ringing, by the ingenuities of torture with which it threatened the room, was the signal for a general stampede. A common type, too, was the ambitious Tyro who burned with some single idea, perhaps, which he could not repress, but who had not learned the art so well known to the old stagers, of making a single idea carry him with credit through a whole speech, and who, when he had polished and condensed his one idea into some weighty and audacious epigram (while the preceding speaker was addressing the room), and at last found his opportunity, rose and with rhetorical flourish fired it off with *clat* and satisfaction, but having nothing further with which to follow it up, was left standing speechless, and so becoming confused, stammering, and, at last, hopelessly belated, sat down overwhelmed with confusion and shame. Then there was the Logic-chopper, with whom politics was a chain of syllogisms, and who insisted on wire drawing each smallest platitude, and

dividing it into its component parts, although the whole argument was of so thin, patent, and transparent a character that you could foresee his point and have ample time to fall asleep, while he was winding his dreary and monotonous way among the successive links which he had interposed between his first premiss and his ultimate conclusion. More tough and irrepressible, if not more wearisome, were the Hobbyists—the anti-vaccination, anti-vivisection, but particularly the protection-hobbyist who traced the decadence of England to her one-sided system of Free Trade, dragging it into every debate, and winding up invariably with the unanswerable poser, which he hurled as a Parthian shot at his opponents, ‘What is the use of your cheap loaf if you have no Saturday night?’ Of less frequent occurrence, but coming as it were from some higher atmosphere down to this wordly forum of debate, were to be seen the Idealist. young, soft, and of consumptive aspect, to whom this tough world offered no more difficulty for the construction of his airy dreams than if it were cobweb; the confirmed and unbending Moralist, who saw no reason why the millennium should not be realized now and here, if men would but follow the dictates of simple morality, and who would begin at once to inaugurate it by giving back Gibraltar to Spain, India to its own native population, and the blessings of ‘home rule’ and a ‘constitution’ to negroes, Zulus, Hottentots, and all the dwellers in the Southern Seas.

The foregoing specimens, although typical and characteristic, were, most of them, loose and irrelevant in debate; but there were others deep in political knowledge, dangerous antagonists, who stuck to the subject in hand, going into matters elaborately; who came down to the rooms bristling with dry but pregnant and ugly statistics; men who knew the details of budgets, of exports and imports, of income-tax and legacy-duty, with the minuteness of an under-secretary to the Treasury; who could tell you the price of the quartern-loaf for each of the forty years preceding the repeal of the Corn Laws.

and for each of the forty years since, who knew all about county government, rotten ships, and especially rotten boroughs, for which, indeed, they were prepared and armed with a complete scheme of grouping redistribution, or extinction. Others again there were, whose memories were a complete *repertoire* of all the parliamentary debates of the last quarter of a century, men who knew what Lord Beaconsfield had said at the Mansion House or Lord Derby at Liverpool, and who, instead of meeting their opponents by direct arguments, pelted them indirectly with damaging phrases that at one time or another had fallen from their Parliamentary leaders, rolling under their tongues as if they were utterances of momentous import, such mystic and sublime phrases as 'peace with honor,' 'scientific frontier,' 'residuum,' 'whigs bathing,' 'mending and ending,' 'plundering and blundering,' 'leaps and bounds,' 'extinct volcanoes,' and the like.

Such were a few of the leading types of speakers, who kept up the dreary hum and monotony of debate, and who, although in many cases exhibiting in spite of defective utterance, genuine insight and common sense, made little or no impression on the room. But, among the casual or habitual frequenters, there were always to be found one or more speakers of a different order, men who (although knowing little, perhaps, of the real difficulties of practical politics, and less of political detail) could, by their brilliancy of handling, carry the room away over the heads of men of much more practical wisdom, business knowledge and insight into men and the world. Among all these, perhaps the most splendid and brilliant was a young Irishman, who, for rapidity, copiousness, fertility of analogy and picturesque metaphor, all plying around and irradiating a clear and striking thread of fact and argument, was unrivalled among the speakers of my time. During the many nights that I sat in the c rooms as a silent listener, men of brilliant and various powers came and went, but, through all the changes of audience, and in spite of unpopular opinions

on certain questions, no one made so great an impression on the room. It mattered little that his history was superficial, and his political knowledge such as was picked up from the daily papers; here, at any rate, was the combination of qualities which most delighted and fascinated the imagination of the miscellaneous popular mind. It was in vain that the old dryasdusts and bookworms popped up every now and then to set him right on a point of history; or the statisticians interrupted him with their figures and reports; in vain, too, strangers rose to contradict his account of foreign countries, or men of business to show the impracticable nature of his schemes; all opposition was swept away and forgotten, under a brilliant, rapid, and mingled stream of fact and argument, metaphor and illustration, picturesque personality, and classical quotation. Indeed, I have often thought, when I walked down to the House of Commons (as I sometimes did after one of those brilliant harangues), and listened there to the pompous dullness of the ordinary Cabinet official (selected most often for his supposed possession of precisely this class of ability), or even to the rhetorical efforts of the great fetishes of oratory and debate, how real a descent there was in native spontaneity, variety, and power; and when I have noticed the effect which the speeches of this young Irish orator invariably produced on strangers happening to visit the rooms, of every grade of education and culture, I have said to myself, here is the combination of qualities which the Democracy, if it had its way, and had to choose for itself by individual ballot, would select as its ideal, and elevate to the supreme place. Rapidity, copiousness, audacity, fertility of metaphor and invective, and power of personal characterization; these are the attributes by which the mingled mass of men, educated and uneducated alike, are most enchanted and carried away, and which, more than all other characteristics, impress them with the idea of vague and general intellectual superiority. Indeed, so clearly did I perceive, after watching these debates over a long period of

time, that these were the qualities which the Democracy, when full-blown, would most delight to honour, that on the recent appearance on the political horizon of a new meteor, I ventured to predict that in no long time he would rise to a commanding position in the government of the country, in spite of the ridicule with which he was for a time greeted by the graver politicians and journalists. And so far was this prediction realised, that some two years later the leadership of the House of Commons and the partial control of the affairs of the Empire, were actually handed over to one possessed of as little political insight and real grasp of political problems as the most irresponsible tyro of debate, to one, indeed, the only reason for whose prominence in the public mind, lay in the possession of qualities of the same essential order, but, as I can testify, of less brilliancy, variety, and power than many a second rate stager in those old discussion-rooms.

If these, then, are the qualities which, vigorously and unscrupulously pushed lead to political position and power and if State-manship, on the other hand, implies insight into the effects of legislation on the moral, social, and intellectual concerns of a people, and the power of constructing wise and far-seeing measures which will work with the least friction and injustice, the fear of the demagogue in democracies, which we have seen to be so prevalent, would almost seem to be justified.

But the real truth is, that what is called statesmanship in democracies does not imply any such high qualities as we imagine. On the contrary, party politics being the order of the day, and the disputes and conflicts of classes and interests being settled, not as formerly, by the sword on the battle-field but by wordy warfare in peaceful constitutional assemblies, the man who, by rapier-like sharpness, swiftness, and precision of tongue shall do most execution on the enemy, is the man most required by the party in opposition, and, in consequence, must become the constructive statesman when that party comes into power. Nor is the want of technical knowledge and experience

of the various governmental departments any great bar, as might be supposed; for it is generally understood that there are always underlings enough—permanent under-secretaries and the like—who will supply the requisite information, besides the command which a government always has of the opinions of the best men in every department, of law, medicine, war, science, and art. If then, as is generally admitted, Ministers must from now onwards carry out the popular will, what is wanted is not so much men with special knowledge of the various departments, as men that shall concentrate and give to the will of the nation or party, force, expression, and embodiment; and for this the demagogue is perhaps as well fitted as another. We are too apt to exaggerate the amount of special knowledge that is required in a statesman. In France, men pass at once from their solitary study to take a great portfolio of State; and succeed as well, perhaps, if not better, than the old hacks of routine. In America, too, the members of the Congress, and even of the Senate, are mostly men whose knowledge of public affairs has been gathered from the newspapers, or from their business experience and general knowledge of the world. And in England it would, indeed, require an excess of superstition to believe that knowledge of special departments is necessary in the holders of great offices of State, when we see men who must have a place in the Cabinet solely because of their territorial influence, their oratorical power, or their power in debate, pitchforked, as it were, from the India Office to the War Office, from the War Office to the Admiralty, Home, or Foreign Office, and back again, without the slightest previous experience of these various departments.

We have spoken of the fear there is of the masses choosing the demagogue, but that it is not only the masses who would choose the demagogue, may be seen in the present attitude of the aristocracy and land-owning class in this country. At one time—indeed, until quite recently—the leaders of the great parties in the State were drawn from the same class, and

represented the same general interests, and as the differences between them could only be more or less superficial, a tone of mutual and habitual courtesy was at all times observable. But now that other classes have risen to power and the material interests of the aristocracy, and even their political and social privileges, are being threatened and measures are carried which touch their dearest sentiments, the fine old tone of courtesy is lost, and precisely those same arts of the demagogue are snatched at and made use of to damage their opponents, as are used by their opponents to damage them.

If it be said that the function of a Government is by wise initiative to educate the people to higher conceptions of political affairs, I would reply that, not only is this not the function of a Government (being really the office of the great political thinkers and publicists of literature and the Press), but that in fact, governments do not pretend to it, but rather wait, before deciding on a policy by which to steer, until they hear the shouting from the shore through the daily, weekly and monthly organs of opinion. So long indeed, as Party Government exists, knowing the illusions by which men are led we may safely predict the existence and continued influence of the demagogue, coarse or refined, in the same way as, so long as the people are ignorant, we may predict the continued prosperity of the quack. I should as soon indeed, expect to find those solemn persons who flock, Bible in hand, to church on Sunday mornings to hear the poor platitudes that fall from the pulpit orator selecting as their guide in the conduct of life the great spiritual thinkers, philosophers, and scientists, as the people of a country selecting as their ruler the wise and far-seeing political thinker. Not that I blame them for not doing so, on the contrary, men of deep political insight are apt to take too long views of politics, and would, if they had the power grasp at the realization of their ideals before public opinion was ripe, and so throw society into confusion, with the certainty too of recoil. If we admit, then that we must have

the demagogue—on the side of the rich when the party that represents the poor is in power, on the side of the poor when the rich are in power—there need be no special cause for anxiety. So long as the demagogue represents the interests of his party, or the people, and not his own interests, he is doing precisely what is expected of him; should he work directly for his own hand, and so become mischievous, he is easily dismissed; should he attempt to lead public opinion before the natural time, the world has a fine instinct for men with higher ideas than its own, and he will be quickly superseded. My own objection to the successful demagogue is the weight which, from his position, he carries into regions of thought, where, from want of knowledge, his influence must be most pernicious. I have noticed that the People, or the Press as representing the People, prefer to hear the opinions of their leading statesmen, on subjects entirely foreign to their own pursuits, to the opinions of the professors of the subjects themselves. I have known meetings specially called to give the public an opportunity of hearing some eminent man on his own specialty, where the newspaper reports next day merely observed that the learned lecturer, after delivering a most interesting and exhaustive discourse, was followed by the chairman—some Cabinet Minister, perhaps—and have then gone on to give *his* remarks in full. All this, of course, is gradually taken more and more at its worth as the great mass of the people increase in knowledge, but, owing to the illusion which surrounds the occupants of position and power, it will never be altogether countervailed. Even more pernicious than the chance influence of the demagogue on subjects foreign to politics, is his influence on Foreign Affairs, where, from want of knowledge, he may upset established relations, precipitate wars, and stir up animosities which can only, perhaps, be allayed after a great expenditure of time and money. But here, again, we are comforted by the reflection that, owing to the force of prescription and the binding character of international arrangements,

interference in foreign affairs is every day becoming less and less frequent, till it is now almost limited to retrograde communities in outlying regions of the world. In America, where foreign complications are reduced to a minimum, and elections turn almost entirely on domestic questions, the issues are so well defined, and the policy to be pursued is so well known and understood by the people themselves, that it is of very little importance who is at the head of affairs, and almost any man with a character for common honesty, any 'blind horse' or abstraction of a man, about whom little is known, may have a chance for the highest position. But then, in America, the politician, or even the statesman, has little more influence than a vestryman has with us. Indeed, it seems clear that until what is called the Statesman ceases with us to be the fetish which from ancient tradition he has become, until rhetorical verbiage ceases to carry with it, as it does with us, the idea of general superiority of mind, and the opinion of rulers and men of 'position,' on all topics human and divine, ceases to be of such transcendent moment, the reign of the demagogue, with such evils as he may bring with him, may be expected to continue.

CHAPTER VI.

DEMOCRACY— THE MARCH OF CONCENTRATION.

IN the preceding chapters I have discussed the dangers with which the stability of Democracies is threatened from the *political* side. But, of late, certain dangers have been pointed out as threatening its stability from the *economic* side. It is said that that Equality of Conditions which is the essential principle of Democracy is not the ultimate goal of society, but, on the contrary, is only a temporary stage, through which society is passing, and which in time must give way to the old condition of inequality; the reason alleged being that, owing to the progress of invention, the perfecting of machinery, and the increased facilities afforded by these, commodities can be produced and distributed more cheaply, more efficiently, and more expeditiously on a large scale than on a small one; and that therefore there is a natural and inevitable tendency to the concentration of capital and the materials of industry in fewer and fewer hands, with the certainty of an industrial aristocracy ultimately arising, as powerful and oppressive as the old feudal aristocracy which it will have replaced. It is pointed out that in primitive states of society each man was his own weapon-maker, tent-maker, clothier, and food-producer; that as the arts of civilization advanced, and the division of labour was found to be more advantageous and productive, we had manufacturers and retailers of all sizes, large, small, and intermediate; and it is argued that as time goes on, the process of concentration will increase to an extent of which only the beginnings are at present visible. Special manufactures have

long been concentrated in particular localities, like Sheffield, Birmingham, and Manchester which, from their situation, or their easy access to natural agents, have enabled their appropriators to drive all other competitors in this country from the field. It is only recently that this tendency to concentration has extended to agriculture, yet already, in some parts of America, the great bonanza farms threaten to drive the small independent farmers to the wall, and now that this tendency is beginning to invade the province of distribution, we see those immense Co-operative Stores, which have so injured the small independent retailers, and compelled many of them to close their shops and take dependent situations in the larger concerns. And thus the tendency is to make capitalists fewer and more powerful and workmen of all kinds more numerous, more helpless, and more dependent, and so to re-establish that tyranny of the few over the many, which we had hoped to have abolished for ever from this world.

Now, even admitting that this tendency to concentration is natural and even inevitable, I do not feel bound to admit the inference drawn from it. On the contrary were there nothing else it is simply and flatly incredible *a priori*, that the same civilization which has ameliorated the lot of man and roused him from the degradation in which he was sunk, should, in its natural course and evolution, and by means, too, of instruments, all of which are good in themselves—greater education and knowledge of the arts of life, greater command over physical and material agents greater powers of production, and the rest—so reverse its steady and beneficent influence as to lead men back again into that degradation and dependence from which they have emerged. It is incredible that after the long centuries of struggle to lift themselves from the slough in which feudal inequality had plunged them, men should allow themselves to be ensnared and fettered by an industrial inequality as fixed as galling and as hopeless. The fallacy, it is plain lies in confounding the conditions on which feudal

inequality rested, with the conditions necessary to the consummation of industrial inequality. Feudal inequality, it must be remembered, was imposed by force, and upheld by the sword; and when once fastened on the necks of the People could only be thrown off as they came up to an *equality of power* with their masters. Its pernicious effects, therefore, must naturally last as long as the feudal *régime* lasts. But the industrial inequality to which 'the march of concentration' tends, if it come at all, must come by the free *consent* of the people; and will only be permitted to advance to the point at which it is for the general good. When its evil effects begin to show themselves, the People have it in their power to make such laws as shall convert the great increase in material prosperity which concentration will bring about, to their own benefit. Of late years, and since the laws and conditions that have produced the existing inequalities of wealth have been more clearly discerned, proposals have been made, and by many are seriously entertained, for levelling the existing inequalities, and converting them from a national danger to a national benefit. Men are beginning to see, for example, that the profits from all trades and industrial undertakings should, in the natural way, and by the mere effect of competition, tend to an *equality*; and are beginning to discover that the unnatural agency which thwarts this beneficent tendency is the existence of monopolies—monopolies of the land of a country and its natural agents, monopolies of special privileges, of special situations, and the like. Of the monopoly of land, the Feudalism of England, as of all Europe formerly, with its now baneful influence on national expansion, is the result. The great millionaires of cities like London and New York are the product of monopolies of special situations; and the great railway-kings of America, with their growing and pernicious influence, of the monopoly of special privileges. The natural remedy for this, according to some, is the resumption of land and of all special privileges by the State; by which means all

those profits which arise from the general expansion and progress of the community would be diverted from the pockets of individuals, whom they make dangerous or pernicious, to the great general public, whom they would benefit. This, it is thought, would counteract that vast aggregation of capital in fewer and fewer hands which 'the march of concentration' is swiftly bringing about, by throwing open lands that are held for a rise (thereby taking off the strain of competition, and so raising wages), besides relieving those 'gluts' which are so disastrous to great bodies of the working-classes. All this, however, is by the way, and on it I here offer no opinion, What I wished to point out was, that when the People have the power, there is no condition for which a remedy and balance cannot be found, in so far, of course, as the progress of knowledge, of the arts of life, and the age and time of the world will permit. As to the particular remedies to be employed, these may well be left to form the subject of a separate volume.

CHAPTER VII.

DEMOCRACY—MORALITY.

IN the present chapter I propose to consider with the reader some of the *moral* evils with which Democracy, as a principle of government, has been charged. The most important, perhaps, and objectionable of these evils, especially to those brought up in aristocratic traditions, is what De Toqueville has called ‘the tyranny of the majority;’ the tendency there is for the condition of Equality to fetter originality and individuality of mind and character, and to put restraints on the free expression of opinions that run counter to the sentiments and prejudices of the great body of the people. In aristocracies, the upper classes have not only the material power necessary to defend themselves against the adverse sentiments and opinions of the majority, but they have a defence also in pride, and in the contempt with which they regard these opinions. The dissolute and sceptical courtiers of the age of Voltaire or of Charles II., for example, had about as much regard for the conscientious scruples of the superstitious and priest-ridden tradesmen, dependents, and serfs, that made up what is called ‘the people,’ as they had for the cattle in their fields. But, in democracies, where, from the prevailing ideas of equality, there is no creature so mean and vulgar but is accustomed to have his opinions and prejudices treated with serious regard, there is neither the power nor the pride in individuals to act as a bulwark against the tide of public sentiment; the more so, as this very importance attaching to each individual gives to the opinions and sentiments of the people in mass a kind of sacred infallibility. In aristocracies, too, the upper classes are secretly conscious that their errors

and fruities will be extenuated by reason of that sweet illusion so prevalent among all 'inferiors' and underlings, whereby vice in the great and powerful is not quite the same low and forbidding thing it is in the poor and low-born, but shows rather as a pardonable eccentricity, a kind of foil or shade to set off the general lustre, or is even converted by the baser sort into positive virtue, much in the same way as one often hears the atrocities of the old Jewish Jehovah (by reason of the halo which power and majesty throw over deformity) converted by modern preachers, with loathsome baseness into positive virtues, the series of successive exterminations of men, women, and children being severally particularized as special and peculiar mercies enduring for ever. If, in aristocracies the upper classes are defended by their power and pride against the pressure of the majority, the lower classes, too on their side have a defence against the tyranny of the few in their numbers their obscurity, and the sympathy of their fellows. But, in democracies, where the very air is charged with hostile prejudices, where, it is asked, can the individual fly for escape?

Now, I am bound to confess, that were this charge (so freely urged against democracies) of repressing originality and the free expression of sentiment and thought, made good, it would be, to me at least, condemnation final and irrevocable. But if we calmly consider it, is it not incredible that a form of government which permits the greatest latitude of individual *action* should at the same time put the greatest restraint on individual *thought*? The truth is, that the tyranny of opinion in aristocracies is really quite as great as in democracies, the only difference being that in democracies where there is no gradation of classes, the tyranny is general and universal, whereas in aristocracies, where society lies in layers one above another, the tyranny is exercised only by each class over its own members. But then it must be observed that the advantage which aristocracies gain by reason of the limited extent of

the pressure to which they are subjected, is fully compensated by the greater intensity and concentration of that pressure. The social pressure put on the members of an aristocracy by the written or unwritten laws and customs of their order, is greater than any that could be brought to bear in a Democracy. Those who, in the old aristocratic times, refused to fight a duel when insulted, or broke their word of honour with their own class, or betrayed the interest of their order, were visited by social penalties more terrible than could anywhere be found or enforced in democracies. In democracies, on the other hand, although the individual lies broadside to the full sweep of public sentiment, his defence lies in the differentiation of sentiment and thought into which the great breakers of public opinion split in their onward roll, and which so neutralise, balance, and antagonise each other, as to rob them of all their terrors. Besides, in democracies, where the least possible restraint is put on freedom of action, only such restraints are put on freedom or expression of thought as are indispensable for common morality; whereas, in aristocracies, besides these restraints, there is the more minute and circumstantial pressure imposed on each individual, by a host of unwritten customs, prejudices, sentiments, and traditions. Take India and America, as examples; one, of the most rigid of all forms of aristocracy, that of caste; the other, of the purest and most advanced of democracies; and what do we find? In India, the tyranny of custom, opinion, and mode of life is so great, that the slightest infringement is followed by a loss of caste, and the loss of caste is tantamount to a sentence of execution; and, from old habit and custom, this tyranny is worn so easily and smoothly that men walk about to all outward appearance as if they were really free. But in America freedom of thought and sentiment is so complete, that you have the spectacle, hitherto unknown, of Catholics, and Protestants, Atheists and Mormons, Freelothers, Shakers, and Quakers, all living quietly side by side in peaceful toleration; and the sense of liberty so acute, that the slightest

restraint galls the spirit and raises aloud the cry of tyranny and oppression, which the old effete aristocracies hearing from a distance, regard with secret satisfaction as the forerunner of disruption and ruin

A more serious charge brought against democracies is their tendency to generate a low tone of Morality. In aristocracies, where society is divided into 'classes' or castes, lying one above another in successive strata, the individuals composing these respective classes are bound together by certain written or unwritten laws and customs, which form a kind of code of honour by which the conduct of the individual members is regulated. And just as a man feels his obligations to his own family more binding than his obligations to his neighbours, so these 'laws of honour' which bind a man to his own class, have much greater influence over his actions than the ordinary 'laws of morality' which unite him to the world in general. It will scarcely, I believe, be denied that the code of honour which regulated the intercourse of the Upper Classes in the old aristocracies had much more influence over their conduct than the Ten Commandments, and the same spirit pervaded every class down even to the various orders of monks and domestic servants. Trade, too, formed no exception, but under this *regime*, and at a time when from its limited extent it could still be confined to corporations and guilds, the old manufacturing and trading houses that had attained to a kind of historic reputation carried into business the same code of honour and integrity that the old aristocratic families carried into their prescriptive occupations, and would no sooner dream of turning out an inferior cloth or blade, than a gentleman would of breaking his word of honour, or cheating at cards. Now, however, that commerce has long burst the barriers of guilds and corporations, and flows freely and without restraint in whatever direction it can find an opening, this old spirit has to a large extent become extinct, although the tradition lingers among the older fashioned and long established

In democracies, many circumstances have conspired to give rise to a different state of morality. If we take America and the colonies as the countries where the spirit of Democracy has within our own experience been most completely realised, we shall find in the circumstances of their early history explanation of those moral characteristics which to a large extent distinguish them. Going back in imagination to the early condition of these colonies, we see men reared in all the traditions of countries where there was not an acre of soil but was fenced in and appropriated so that you could not set down your foot without danger of trespass, where the air was so full of privilege and distinction that upper and lower classes seemed scarcely to belong to the same order of being, landing in successive immigrations on the shores of vast continents, where boundless expanses of rich and fertile soil stretched before them to unknown horizons, and lay awaiting the energy, the talent, and the resources of man—and where, in the absence of ranks and titles (all being about alike in social circumstances and material resources), no ground of social superiority was recognised, but all met on a footing of equality. Under such circumstances, it may be asked, what was most likely to be the supreme aim, effort, and ambition of these men? That there must be some aim to which, as a body, society would bend all its efforts, and to the attainment of success in which each man must look for distinction, is a necessity of the nature of man. It lies in the very nature of man, that he cannot rest until he has brought himself up to a point of *equality* with his fellows; and when he has reached that equality, he cannot rest until he has raised himself to a point of *superiority* to them. From the play and interaction of these two primary impulses and poles of the mind, spring all the varied movements of human life, with its emulations and ambitions, its envies, jealousies, and pride. But, although the love of *equality* on the one hand, and the love of *inequality* on the other, are the motor impulses which by their ceaseless play

Keep the world from stagnating, the direction of men's efforts will be determined by the *circumstances* in which they are placed, and in which they must live and work. It is evident, therefore, that Rank and Title, although they make a fine point of distinction and inequality, could have no chance of becoming the practical aim of the colonists. For, in the first place, they did not exist to excite emulation (all being drawn from the same station in life), and even were it not so, in the absence of the necessary conditions for basing on them an assumption of superiority, such, for example, as the appropriation of the soil in a few hands, they must quickly have become obsolete. Nor could Culture become the main object of their pursuit, for, although it might be made a point of distinction, the exigencies of daily life forbade it being a general pursuit, and made it as remote from the interests of the great mass of men as a knowledge of the distance of Jupiter or composition of the Sun. The only possible object of general pursuit as a point of distinction must have been Material Wealth—more food, more clothing, more luxuries, more command over the products of labor—and to this, indeed, the vast continents, stretching in all their undeveloped opulence before the colonists, incited and compelled them. Education, especially of the simple and practical kind, was indeed highly prized, but not as a potent auxiliary in the struggle for wealth and material success, than as an end in itself. With Material Wealth, then, as the tangible and easily recognizable basis on which to found a stable and orderly social structure, and with the very custom of the country compelling men to enter a land with little genius of the well generally well-organized, to be able to secure a living, a first and often a chief consideration was the form of society that it was exactly the same. Now, it is not so now, where every individual has the right to his own land where order of the empire is the chief object of the whole nation, but, in the case of the colonies, it was the chief object of the whole nation.

in *himself*, but in the *class* to which he belongs. But in democracies, where there are no classes, and therefore no class-pride, prejudice, or tradition which it is a point of honour to maintain, the individual has his centre of action in *himself* alone ; he becomes primarily all in all to himself ; his own aims and designs all-important ; and an excessive *individualism* and *egotism* become his prevailing habit of mind and point of view. And, as from the relations that exist between men, springs the morality they will exhibit towards each other, it is evident that the tone of morality in democracies will not on the one hand be as high and keen as the 'point of honour' between members of the same class in an aristocracy, nor on the other so low as that existing between different classes ; not so high, for example, as the scrupulousness of 'gentlemen' in their relations with each other, nor so low as the moral relations existing between Jews and Gentiles, masters and serfs, owners and slaves. And Material Wealth being, as we have seen, the main object of pursuit, the code of morality, while stringent enough to afford a secure basis on which to build, will be one elastic enough to allow of every man having a full and free chance of reaching his object ; a code of morality, in short, that will put no further restraint on individual enterprise than is absolutely necessary for general security, and the motto of which might well run, 'Be as sharp as you can, but meet your engagements.' The result is, that while in aristocracies 'honour' is the watchword, in democracies it is 'smartness' and keenness of perception ; and while in aristocracies it is no disgrace to a man to have been taken in by the superior 'smartness' or sharpness of some purely business man, in democracies it would be pretty universally considered so. But then, as a set-off it must be remembered that while in aristocracies the great body of the lower mercantile and trading classes will submit to almost any indignity, provided only they can make money in the transaction ; in democracies, each man prizes the erectness of his manhood more than

might else besides, and sooner than put up with a personal affront would throw up the concern altogether.

Another vice said to be characteristic of democracies is the vice of Envy.

There is nothing, perhaps, that better exemplifies the glory of the human mind and its potential infinitude, than the splendid heights to which man will rise when his principles, his personal dignity, honour, or manhood are attacked; the serene cheerfulness with which he will submit to contumely, reproach, and even martyrdom, in defence of what he believes to be the right. On the other hand, nothing better illustrates his intellectual and moral meanness, and even baseness, than the ease and sheep-like docility with which he will permit all this free elevation and expansion to be 'put into circumscription and confine' by some small and miserable idea, and himself to be led captive by some poor phrase; and that, too, not because the truth or the right in question is subtle or recondite (on the contrary, it is generally as open as the day), but because it is looked at through the glazy eye of custom and has got itself enveloped in the thick obstruction and threefold wrappage of tradition, imposture, and illusion. When we consider, for example, the glorious conception of the great Cause of things which arises in the mind when in its rare and elevated moments it contemplates the ever-rolling miscellany of the World with its inwoven radiances and powers, we are conscious of the potential greatness and elevation of the human mind, but when an establishment of this high conception then pierces the Indian Vishnu on his ear, or Hebrew Jehovah seated with his feet on the rocks of his crevices, with their shepherds too full of basenesses, jealousies, and warlike passions, we recognize its perished greatness. Again, when we see a man, or a woman, friends, even life itself, in a struggle, we feel the essential nobility of man; but when we find that all this fine sentiment is established and established away by a proper few phrases extracted from the voluminous works of Locke, the

blood,' 'privileges of nobility,' and the like, we are conscious of its real smallness. Now, in aristocracies, where the idea of rank and title draws a magic ring around man's soul, marking out the limits within which his nature is allowed to freely travel, there is no scope for envy between the different classes into which Society is artificially divided. And besides, as the members of each class are practically indemnified for having to bend to their 'superiors,' by their 'inferiors' bending to them, a kind of poetic justice keeps each man's nature sweet and harmonious. But in democracies, where men's conception of their own dignity and manhood suffers no restraint from the imprisoning nature of a mere phrase (unless, indeed, it be the idea of 'equality' itself, which, although true on the defensive side, becomes false, and a phrase merely, when used aggressively), where all men are nominally equal, where a general fear of falling beneath your neighbours' achievements seizes all minds, and where each man is seen, as in Carlyle's pitcher of tamed vipers, struggling to get his head above the rest, Envy burns through society like a prairie fire. But then it is to be remarked, as a set-off, that, although envy is wanting between the *different* classes in an aristocracy, it is intensified between the members of the *same* class; and any appearance of a man attempting to ape his superiors, or aspiring to rise to the class above his own, is regarded with a more narrow and intense envy than the general and diffused envy of democracies. Besides, envy, like avarice and other baser passions which in the economy of Nature are converted into good, subserves a beneficent purpose, by stimulating the dull and torpid, and keeping them up to the general level; should it become excessive, it can easily be allayed by the touchstone of actual life, which is the last test of superiority; and distinction thus gained must naturally call forth a more genuine feeling of reverence than can possibly arise where men's titles represent qualities altogether extraneous to personal merit.

CHAPTER VIII.

DEMOCRACY—SOCIETY.

IN the present chapter I shall turn for a moment to consider the *usual* evils alleged to be inherent in the principle of Democracy; and on looking through the pages of one of the most eminent exponents of that principle, I come first on the charge of Monotony.

In countries where men are all alike equal, society, when looked at from the outside and from a distance, shows like a vast *ready* plan, made up of particles of the *same size*, character, and composition throughout, and cannot, in consequence, have the picturesque of old aristocratic countries where you have haughty contemptuous feelings on the one

we might imagine that men would be all about alike, an intimate knowledge of the individuals discloses wide and interesting points of difference and of individuality in ideas, sentiments, and habits of thought. In aristocracies, on the contrary, although the broad and recognized differences of 'classes' in culture, manners, speech, and ideas, give to *society* a pleasing and picturesque variety, the *individuals* of which these respective 'classes' are composed (being moulded on the broad general ideas of the class, rather than, as in democracies, developed along the lines of their own nature and constitution) soon become monotonous in their sameness and absence of variety. In America, you never know what peculiarities of character and thought will suddenly be disclosed by the man you meet; but in England, so marked and definite are the aims, ideals, and modes of thought of the tradesman class, for example, that, broadly speaking, you may affirm that in knowing one you know all. This is true to even a greater degree of the class of 'gentlemen;' mere differences of opinion between them becoming invisible in the great common identity of sentiment, manners, speech, and tone of thought. This contrast between democracies and aristocracies is well reflected in the dramatic productions of the different countries. In England, the ordinary stock plays are always picturesque, owing to the variety of 'classes' of society that are introduced—servants, footmen, tradesmen, professional men, noblemen, and the like—but there is little more than the most superficial difference in the types; the interest in new plays being made to turn rather on new situations and circumstances than on new types of character or modes of thought. In America, on the contrary, the interest is made to turn rather on new and original forms of mind and character, than on a picturesque contrast of classes and social types. In a word, society in aristocracies, being laid out in 'classes' like a neatly-trimmed garden, has a superficial picturesqueness which soon grows monotonous; but in democracies, where it is allowed to

develop in all its spontaneity like a Brazilian forest, it clothes us with the variety and pictures of Nature.

Another charge brought against democracies is their want of Culture.

I have already shown that, in countries where there are no hereditary titles, ranks, or honours; where men are all about alike in worldly station and material power; and where rich tracts of fertile land lie in vast expanses open to all, and waiting only to be developed by labour, the acquisition of wealth (especially in an age when religious fanaticisms have ceased to be the serious concerns of life) must become the main object of pursuit, and culture, in its highest sense, must be more or less ignored by the great body of the people. At the same time I pointed out, too, that while culture in this large sense would be ignored, the ‘practical’ education so necessary for success in business and industrial pursuits would be very highly prized. In circumstances, too, if we leave out the few belonging to the learned classes who make up the culture of the community, we shall find that among the great body of the people there is little regard for general culture and intelligence. Men admire an oration that will turn a parliamentary majority, a treaty, a speech that will settle a peace or at the best, a machine that will economise labour, but they have little or no valuation of it as literature or as general knowledge that will help man live, which characterises the finer and rarer intelligences, and in which true culture chiefly consists. But, still, judged as a whole, in their early stages, our Americans – at all periods of their existence – resemble more the Egyptians, than any certain other race living in the various times of those two far-off ages. They are like them, not least, in their indifference to the great body of the people’s intellectual training, and in their concentration upon the practical side of life. In many respects, however, they differ from both the Egyptian and the Chinese peoples. The latter placed the greatest value upon the study of history, and the former upon the study of astronomy.

individual characteristics of mind and character. It makes comparatively little difference, for example, to the general estimate of a working-man in aristocracies (so long, that is, as he remains a working-man), whether his feelings be coarse or refined, his intellect narrow and obtuse or capacious and acute; men's interest in him ceasing from the time they know the 'class' or order to which he belongs, without inquiring into his individual mental or moral characteristics. The first and most important point in regard to any man in an aristocracy, is his class, family, or connexions; in a word, is he a 'gentleman' or not? The question as to whether he is clever and intelligent, or has this or that point of talent or character, being but of secondary concern. The consequence of this preponderating interest in mere rank and 'position' over all individual characteristics of intellect and knowledge is, that men's whole aim (after the daily routine of the profession, trade, or shop, has been gone through) is to be accredited with the qualities most admired, that is to say, the qualities of the 'gentleman' in the conventional sense of that term. And as these qualities consist rather in certain outward and conventional forms—in certain stock manners and modes of sentiment and behaviour, in arts of politeness and airs of distinction—than in any general elevation of thought, or insight into the world, culture, in aristocracies, except within the circle of the few to whom by nature or circumstance it is congenial, has no home, and the reign of the middle-class 'Philistine,' coarse or refined, becomes assured and perennial. In democracies it is quite otherwise. With no difference of 'classes' (all men being gentlemen who behave themselves), with money as the main object of pursuit with the great masses of the people, the first point of interest in regard to any man is, not the 'class' or category to which he belongs, but how far he possesses the individual personal and intellectual qualities by which worldly success is attained—energy, force of character, perseverance, and insight into men and things. And, as time goes on, and population and wealth

increase, and society is differentiated into its innumerable callings, not only does a cultured class arise, as in aristocracies, but the very facility of passing from one occupation to another (owing to the absence in democracies of prescription, prejudice, and class-monopoly), produces among the people in general a many-sidedness and power of detachment, which is the first condition of that insight into human life and the world, in which culture, on its intellectual side, chiefly consists. And the result of this many-sidedness and power of detachment, this interest in the attributes of the *individual*—intellectual and other—rather than in the mere *class* to which he belongs, is, when stimulated by the educational facilities which characterize democracies, a wider and more general culture than is to be found under any other regime.

Now, these *a priori* considerations will be seen to be verified in the actual intellectual condition of America and the Colonies. Some fifty years ago, De Toqueville, who was the first to lay this charge of want of culture at the door of Democracy, visited America, and found there, as was to be expected in those early days, neither a learned class nor a class of men of culture, but a wide and general thoroughness and intelligence, directed principally to the making of money. Since then, however, wealth has increased, and society has become highly differentiated, and at the present time there are to be found in America perhaps a larger number of cultured persons than in any other country in the world. Lectures on high subjects, which with us can find no adherents, are one of the most profitable sources of income to American authors, and are as popular as the theatre and concert; while more than double the number of books per head of the highest order of literature, including those authors who are read here only by the cultivated few, are read here than in this country. I have, indeed, to confess to being not what I have affirmed to be the exception here suggested by Democracy, that books which, though light on the general level of thought, are very valuable

prized; and that even pseudo-sciences like phrenology, which although superficial, empirical, and but half true, yet profess to let you by a short and easy cut into the mysteries of the human mind, are very popular, and have a great charm for thoughtful men who cannot find time for more severe and protracted studies. In this country, on the contrary, men have so little interest in intellect generally, and the general laws of human nature, than even if men's minds could be accurately measured by the size of the bumps bulging on their foreheads, few would care sufficiently to take the trouble to examine them; although, if by uncovering their fronts their social grade could be as accurately ascertained, the bedridden would rise and be carried in litters. A further illustration of the mental tendencies I have mentioned in democracies will be found in the personal peculiarities of the Americans, and the peculiarities of their thought and literature. If we take the ordinary American whom one meets in one's travels, how often does one see his ideal of excellence appearing in his vulgar boast that 'He guesses he knows human nature about as well as it is to be known.' The higher order of preachers in America, instead of, like ours, dwelling on 'the exceeding sinfulness of sin,' and the metaphysics of repentance, redemption, forgiveness, and other sentimental, half-real, and more or less fictitious affections of the professional conscience and life, dwell on the real weakness of men—their real temptations, real sorrows, real aspirations, and the real delusions by which they deceive themselves and others. And lastly, although great men have no country, and the selection of particular instances must always, of course, be more or less arbitrary, yet, if we take the highest order of literature, we may see in Emerson, for example, an instance of the finest insight into the laws of the human mind since Shakspeare and Bacon; not only the lower side of these laws, as we might expect in a 'cute Yankee,' but their highest spiritual exhibitions. The truth is, any system of government which, like democracy, opens up an unlimited arena and

is given to every individual, and that should be all his power and unfold all his faculties, as a flower unfolds all its petals to the sun, and he must be favourable to culture.

The last, and in some respects the most serious charge brought against Democracy, to which I desire to call attention, is the charge of want of Measure, and want of Dignity.

In a former chapter, I endeavoured to show that the elevation and expansion of the individual mind is the end of Nature—the goal to which all these long centuries of effort and effort have been slowly tending, the last result of which all this formidable apparatus of art and science, machinery, invention and civilization are steadily working. Under the eye of such a goal, may be included all that is comprised in intellectual culture, and to this, as we have just seen, Democracy supplies the most potent stimulus, and affords the most favourable opportunities. Under the term *culture* may be included all that is comprised in the culture of the sentiments and feelings, and unless Democracy will this

intellectual pursuits for their own sake; and of these, again, only a moiety care for any subject outside their own speciality; but all men are alike interested in character and personality. With the great masses of the people, indeed, these are the only subjects of interests outside the range of their daily avocations, as is seen in the prevalent love of sports that call forth nerve, pluck, and tenacity, of adventures that exhibit coolness and daring, and of tales that tell of heroism, chivalry, and magnanimity. Again, it is because the feelings are the very texture and substance of human life, that the affinities of the sexes are founded rather on character and sentiment than on talent; women caring little for mere cleverness, unless when resting on, and growing out of, a deep substratum of strength and refinement of feeling. Even men of great and comprehensive intellect are admired rather for the dim and indefinite idea of elevation and sublimity of mind which is believed to have been the inspirer of their great thoughts, than for the thoughts themselves. It is true that it is by intellect and practical energy that civilization has been advanced, and the great work of the world carried on; and it is true, also, that nations with the greatest shrewdness, invention, and practical power have attained to the highest rank in the world; but it is equally certain that the *individuals* of whom these nations are composed cannot excite the same personal and social interest and admiration, as men whose tastes and feelings have been highly cultivated, and who have been nourished on lofty sentiments of personal dignity, honour, and reserve. Hence it is that Manners, which, in the widest sense of the term, are the expression of this culture of the sentiments and feelings, have a perennial charm for human beings. Although they are often a mere veneering, serving as frequently, like beauty, to conceal baseness, as to express nobility or elevation of mind; although like beauty, too, they are mere *form*, still they can never cease to be interesting; like beauty, they have their roots deep down in the structure of the world, and always refer back to essence

and substance; and without them human life would be as hard and prosaic as the world would be if shorn of its landscapes, horizons, and flowers. They affect us as a beautiful poem, or picture, or statue, which conceals more than it reveals, they have the charm that hangs around whatever suggests finer and nobler existences than are found in reality, getting their effect from the artistic selection of the bright, the interesting, and the refined situations, and the suppression and rejection of all that is low, common and unworthy. No man is habitually so refined and elevated, so uniformly at the height of his character, that he can afford to lay bare his thoughts and feelings in all their nudity. All have their low and generous impulses, their unalike, discordant, and tuneless intervals, their daily distractions of body and mind which leave them with their noble and refined thoughts at neap tide, and hence the necessity of reserve, of courtesy, of dignity—in a word, of *Manners*.

Now, in aristocracies, where society is built on rank and status, on more or less external and conventional differences rather than on any innate differences of nature between man and man, Manners, which emphasize these *differences* and reveal the real *resemblances*, are brought to a high degree of perfection; and men seek to enhance their own importance by all the external agencies of circumstance, dignity, and reserve. But in democracies, where society is built on a foundation of equality, and where universal property is the principle of a better and more extensive title upon which men meet each other and divide between them and their children the products of the soil. The social and political conditions of the democracy are such that the external agencies, which in aristocracies are so carefully cultivated, are almost entirely suppressed. Men seek to enhance their own importance by all the external agencies of circumstance, dignity, and reserve, but the democratic power, which is so much more potent than the aristocratic power, is so much more effective in its action, that it is almost impossible for any man to maintain a high degree of reserve, of dignity, and of reserve.

And this is the reason why the democratic power is so much more potent than the aristocratic power, and why the democratic power is so much more effective in its action, that it is almost impossible for any man to maintain a high degree of reserve, of dignity, and of reserve.

arts of dignity and repose. But this is sadly avenged on them; for when they enter society they carry their indifference to form and manner with them, and so lose the very end for which they are striving—personal distinction—and fail to get credit (especially among strangers) for the great qualities which they perhaps possess. I have known Americans of great power, energy, and penetration, men who have helped to push their country to the first rank of nations, regarded with less personal interest and admiration than many a polite and polished, solemn and impassive Turk, who has helped to turn into a wilderness the most fertile provinces of the earth.

In aristocracies, where there is a hierarchy of classes lying one above another, and where, as in India, the barriers separating caste from caste are insuperable, men's ambitions are restricted to what can be accomplished within the limits of their class; and their manners, in consequence, are the simple, habitual, and traditional manners of their particular caste. Even in tempered castes like our own and those of European nations, where there are openings left for individuals to ascend from one class to another, there is still little effort made by the great majority of the people to rise above their own class. Education, dialect, occupation, all alike forbid it; dialect and want of education among the lower orders, making it difficult for them to disguise their position, and, among the middle classes, the various occupations and modes of life producing a type of character and manners not to be mistaken. The result is, that men's ambition being practically confined within the more or less narrow limits of their own class, their manners remain simple, and free from ostentation and exaggeration. It is only those who lie on the border line, as it were, of the various classes, and whose position, in consequence, is not so assured, who, in their efforts to appear better than they are, are betrayed into ostentation, imitation, and exaggeration. So long, of course, as men live together, the love of small distinctions and the desire of rising above their fellows cannot be

stified, and must cause more or less boasting, affectation, and exaggeration; but in aristocracies it is only between members of the *same* class that this will arise, and, in the general intercourse with the world it is checked by uncertainty as to the position of the person addressed, and so does not publicly appear. And besides, the habit of ordering 'inferiors,' so characteristic of aristocracies, gives a kind of satisfaction to one's feeling of self-complacency, and is practically sufficient to satisfy the ordinary ambitions. But in democracies, on the other hand, where society lies on a dead level of equality, where there is no 'superior' class to keep you down, and no 'inferior' class over which to exercise your authority, the desire for distinction, so innate in every man, closed in on all hands, burns on itself like a reverberating furnace, and not finding any vent in the real world, takes the line of least resistance and blows off in the ideal world of imagination and fancy, and you have the spectacle of men with nothing above them but the

half-apologetic tone which is fatal to true dignity and to that air of distinction which is the special note of what Matthew Arnold would call the 'grand manner.' And just as, in aristocracies, the lordlings of the upper classes take advantage of the general atmosphere of inequality with which men's minds are saturated, to snub or patronise you, who are perhaps in every way, except in mere *status*, their superior; so, in democracies, ostlers and waiters take advantage of the prevailing idea of equality to elevate themselves in the social scale; and by impudently and familiarly slapping you on the shoulder and asking you 'to come in and have a drink,' seek to establish on you their claims to recognition and equality. The result of this disgusting familiarity is to reduce all to a common level of low vulgarity, to let down the tone of manners and behaviour to the lowest point, and even to infect the very language, which, as we see in the slang used by all conditions of men, is reinforced by metaphors drawn from the card-table, the bar-room, the stables, and the streets.

Now, in all this, there is no doubt a good deal of truth, but we must remember that, in contrasting aristocracies with democracies, we too often have in our minds when thinking of aristocracies, only the upper and educated classes; whereas in thinking of democracies, we have in our minds the whole body of the people. But if, as is only fair, we take a more general view, and compare the deep, self-satisfied, and essential vulgarity of the middle-class 'Philistine' among ourselves (not to speak of the 'lower orders') with the light, harmless, and comparatively superficial boaster of democracies, the advantage will, I think, be admitted to be on the side of democracies. Again, we must not forget that most of the criticisms of the manners of democracies come from men bred in the manners of aristocracies, to whom much that is essentially vulgar in aristocracies has got mixed and confounded with the elements of true dignity and real elevation. Much, for example, of what we consider to be real courtesy, especially to inferiors, would

be regarded, and justly regarded, by those brought up in democracies as impertinent condescension; of what we consider true dignity and the 'air of distinction,' as but artistically disguised snobbishness; of what we consider reserve, as vulgar pride or real stupidity. And lastly, we have to remember that the process of differentiation is going on in democracies as in every other social organism, and that in time a large leisured and cultured class (such as even now exists in America), will carry real refinement of mind and behaviour to a very high point; and further, that whereas in aristocracies this culture, owing to the barriers that exist between classes, must be confined to the upper classes alone, in democracies, owing to the absence of these barriers, it will extend throughout the whole body of the people.

PART VI.—THEORY OF PROGRESS.

CHAPTER I.

HISTORICAL.

HAVING prepared the way, I shall, in the present and succeeding chapters, attempt to sketch out the laws which Civilization and Progress follow, and determine if possible the way in which Religion, Science, and Material and Social Conditions, all unite to forward and promote them. Such an attempt will, I trust, not only prove of interest to the reader, but must, if successful, be of the highest importance also. For it will, I believe, be generally admitted that no one has yet succeeded in giving a complete account of the laws of progress, or of the way in which its separate factors act and re-act on each other in their various powers and degrees. It is true we have had many histories of civilization, all of them dealing more or less directly with the problem before us, but all are more or less unsatisfactory. Some of them, while starting out with the essential factors, have in the end been unable to give them more than a partial coherence and unity; others, seizing on some one of the more important factors and ignoring the rest, have thrown its workings into strong relief, leaving the others in the shade; while others, again, have made the whole progress of civilization a mere corollary of some great cosmical law, but a law of so abstract and impersonal a character as to be of little practical value. Take Comte as example of the first. Of all thinkers, perhaps, he has given us the most systematic and complete account of the progress of

Humanity under all its aspects, and has made the most determined attempt to discover the great laws by which it is controlled. And yet, in spite of the splendid insight which he has brought to his task, and the large section of the field which he has irradiated, his results cannot be regarded as more than partially satisfactory. For although, in my opinion, he has been eminently successful in establishing the true and vital nexus between some of the factors, as, for example, between the progress of Science and the evolution of Religion; between others, again, as between Religion and the state of Society at large, he has managed to establish only the most superficial and mechanical relations. He asserts, for example, that Fetishism and Polytheism were accompanied by a state of aggressive Warfare, Monotheism by defensive Warfare, and Positivism by Industry; and wishes us to infer that the changes in Religion were the *causes* of these changes in the state of society. But even admitting that this were *historically true*, as far as he has been able to show instead of *causal* relations they need be nothing more than mere *coincidences*. Nor is this surprising, when we remember that he regards the evolution of civilization as practically synonymous with the evolution of Religion; that is to say, he regards Religion as the central and seminal principle, the *controlling factor* in the process. But if, as we have shown, Religion is the outcome and *effect* of the state of surrounding culture; the *product* of which this is the substance, the *epitome and condensation*, as we have seen, of the knowledge of the Laws of Nature existing at any given period, it is evident that Comte cannot make it the *cause* of the corresponding social state with it inverting the natural relations of the two, and destroying the vital connexion of his scheme as a whole. For, although the laws of civilization, like other great laws of the world, may be read in the evolution of Religion, as well as in the evolution of the material sciences, the former of a *causal* and the latter of a *correlative* nature in the order of time, yet it is as a *representative* Religion acting on civilization, as a *symbol*

with civilization acting on Religion; still *statically*, or in the order of cause and effect, you cannot do so. It was by attempting to do this that Comte failed to bridge the chasm existing between Religion on the one side, and the state of society at large on the other; and so failed to give unity and cohesion to his Theory of Progress.

Take, again, Guizot. In his History of Civilization he has given us an admirable account of the great concrete elements and institutions of society at the various epochs of European history, from the fall of the Roman Empire to the advent of the French Revolution; his object being to show how, from the action and reaction of these institutions, what is known as modern civilization has arisen. Accordingly, his first procedure is to take us back to the fifth century and to show us the barbarian chieftains and their followers, and around and in the midst of them those institutions of the old Roman world that were left standing after the incursions of the invaders had subsided—the vast organization of the Church, the Roman municipal towns, the pervading traditions of Roman jurisprudence, Roman civilization, and the like. Tracing downwards the course of these institutions in a series of brilliant and minutely-worked pictures, we see how they moulded and modified each other as they lay in the dark fermenting-vat of those far-off centuries, until they emerged at last into the full light of Feudalism. Starting afresh with this new arrangement of the original elements, we follow them downwards still further with him, and see them colliding, dissolving, shifting, and recombining, until, after various alternations of fortune, the kings gain the ascendancy, and Monarchy everywhere arises out of the decaying elements of the old feudal world. All this, together with the causes that led up to the Reformation; how it extended into many countries, shifting the balance of political power; uniting here with the spirit of political liberty and weakening the power of the kings, and there being stamped out with an iron heel, until the whole culminated in the French

Revolution; is set forth with masterly analysis and power. But although in this work Guizot has shown the most keen and comprehensive insight into the action and reaction of political and social forces, and although he has traced with rare acuteness the *specific* concrete causes that have united in producing the various phenomena of European civilization in its different stages, he has not attempted to carry up these causes to a higher plane, to subliminate them, as it were, and deduce from them the great laws of progress in general.

Following in the wake of Comte and Guizot, is Buckle, who, in his History of Civilization, has given us a theory of progress differing both in its methods and in its results from those of his illustrious predecessors. Instead of endeavouring like them, to determine the comparative influence exercised on civilization by the different aspects of human thought and culture, whether abstract or concrete, his aim is to cut his way through the midst of the obscuring entanglements and complexities of the problem, to its central and controlling factor. Accordingly, after ranging with comprehensive glance over the great civilizations of the East and the West, he observes, that while the physical powers and aspects of Nature in the East are of so stupendous and overwhelming a character as to stimulate the imagination of man at the expense of his reason, in the West they are so comparatively feeble and insignificant, as to encourage him to lift his depressed head and dare to utilize and conquer them for his own benefit and use. And furthermore he asserts that the knowledge of the laws of the world which springs from this action of the intellect of man on Nature, is not only the most important factor in civilization, but that it is, in fact, the only one, the sole true basis of all such knowledge being the sole agent in determining those phenomena which have received their name of history. The conditions that have been the cause of the various and progressive changes in the greater part of the history of mankind. And he concludes

that instead of regarding Civilization as the product of the co-operation of many *positive* agencies, each of which has played a definite part in Human Progress, Buckle regards it as the result rather of the victory of one only real and positive factor—Science—over a host of *negative* and purely obstructive agencies. But, in thus making Science the central and moving pivot in his theory of progress, he completely ignores and repudiates those great agencies of Religion, Government, Literature, and the like, which are universally regarded as among the main elements in the work of civilization. Religion, for example, which, alone, as we saw in a former chapter, can give *harmony* to all the powers of man—intellectual, emotional, and moral—as he passes through the various stages of culture; and which (as being a necessity of the human mind) is essential to progress, is regarded by Buckle as a mere superstition, a phantom of the imagination bred of ignorance and fear, the baleful parent of those persecutions which have been among the greatest drawbacks to civilization. War, too, which is now generally admitted to have been, especially in early times, one of the greatest of all civilizing agencies, both by preserving the best races in the struggle for existence, and by welding small and primitive tribes into large and complex communities, is regarded by him as simply a pure obstruction, a long unmitigated curse. Government, too, and Literature, he considers, have retarded Progress more than they have advanced it; the former, as being a dreary alternation of blunders and the repeal of blunders; the latter, as being the repository and vehicle of more superstition and falsehood than of reason and truth. Even Morality itself, he thinks, has done more harm than good, by having oftener armed ignorance with bigotry and hatred, than truth with prudence and love. In thus representing civilization as a conflict between the god of light on the one hand, and the numberless brute powers of darkness on the other—between science and superstition, scepticism and credulity, reason and faith—rather than as a consensus of various *positive*

factors, all of which have co-operated in the great work and are connected with each other by natural laws. Buckle has, in spite of his great range of knowledge and his splendid powers of generalization, betrayed a want of insight into the secret structure of the world and of the human mind which has marred his theory of progress and left it partial and incomplete.

Carlyle, too, like Buckle, has aimed rather at finding the *central factor* in the problem of Civilization than at determining the relative value of the various factors and the laws by which they are connected. But instead of finding, like him, the central and operative factor in Science, he finds it in the work of those Great Men whose lives he announces to be the condensed summary of Universal History, as being the patterns and in a sense the creators of all that the general mass of men have contrived to do or to attain—men of whose inner thoughts all that we see standing accomplished in the world is but the embodiment and outward material result. But if we enquire more particularly as to what manner of great men he believes them to be who thus sum up in themselves the progress of civilization, we shall find that they are not, as with Buckle, the men of science, who have made the great discoveries, or the inventors and men of the world, who have applied these discoveries to the arts, comforts, and conveniences of life. It is true that he recognises these in a sort of way, and, like the rest of us, is grateful to them for having given us the steam engine, the telegraph, and the printing press; and for having clothed, lodged, and fed us better than our ancestors of earlier times. But did our boasted civilization consist only in these and the like material comforts, it would be to him but a small concern, a matter of grief and anxiety rather than of gratulation, as treading in the long run, by the luxury it creates, to eat at the moral fire of man. No, it is not such men as these that call forth his admiration and reverence; not these, on whom, as he says, he likes to dwell when contemplating the progress of humanity; but those, rather, and only those

personal momentum and the burning enthusiasm they have aroused in the great masses of men, have been able, like Luther and Mirabeau, to sweep away centuries of abuse and falsehood, to stamp out revered and hoary idolatries, like Mahomet and Knox, or, like Goethe, to place a ray of spiritual sunlight so centrally in the soul of man as, in an age of wintry scepticism, to vivify anew sentiments and emotions that for want of a suitable object had long lain cold and dead. Compared, indeed, with such influences as these on the hearts and souls of men, all mere advances in the comforts and arts of life show poor and mean; and when pressed so as to be made the subject of exultation, as in our own day they so often are, call forth his well-known sarcasms on the 'march of intellect,' 'the progress of the species,' and the like. I am aware that he constantly reiterates that the chief good of man lies in the knowledge of the laws of God and obedience to them; but if we are to gather the meaning of the phrase from his mode of applying it, we shall find that it consists in the knowledge of the spiritual laws of Man—his obligations, duties, and the like—and his subjection to them, rather than in that knowledge of the physical and organic laws of Nature, which, when applied to the arts of life, Buckle regards as the soul and essence of progress. And thus it is that Carlyle, by lifting one great factor of civilization to such a height as to cut off its organic connections with all the rest, has left the solution of the problem of human progress still to be found.

Next comes Herbert Spencer, with his exhaustive 'System of Philosophy,' in which the progress of Civilization figures merely as one illustration more of a law that has necessitated alike the formation of solar systems from misty nebulae; of mountain, and river, and meadow, from the original murky, incandescent ball of earth; and of the bright and infinite variety of animal and vegetable forms from a few primitive simple germs; the great law of Evolution, whereby all things that exist or will exist must pass from the simple to

the multiform, from the incoherent to the coherent, from the indefinite to the definite; the law which, while determining not only that the egg with its simple uniform composition, shall gradually unfold itself into the chick with its complex coherent and definite system of functions and organs; that the worm, 'striving to be man, shall mount through all the spires of form;' determines also that human society itself, which starts from the condition in which each family wanders about alone and isolated, and each man is at once warrior, hunter, fisherman, tool-maker, and builder, shall pass through the nomadic stage, in which several families are united under a kind of chieftainship, where the king is at once priest and judge, and the priest at once judge and king, and eventuate in those complex settled states of modern civilization, where labour is carried to its minutest subdivision, where families, instead of being isolated and independent, are bound to rely on the labour and industry of others for the supply of their most urgent needs, and where kings and popes, prime-ministers, and archbishops, chancellors and judges, with all their long train of official dependents, although each having special and separate functions to perform, are at the same time all bound together in that one great organic unity known as the State. But it is to be noted that, although Spencer has shown that the progress of civilization thus depends remotely on the law of Evolution, he has not shown us the *immediate* factors by which it has been produced, and the way in which they have united to produce it. And hence it is that while his sketch of the progress of civilization in all its various aspects—of government, religion, literature, at last—*is of the greatest value speculatively*, that is to say, as illustration and corroboration of a great theory of the world, it is of little or no use *practically*, that is to say, as showing the immediate factors by which Civilization is produced and by the action of which it is to be advanced or retarded. For as all progress is the work of human beings who are acted on by human forces; which forces, again, have more or less

reference to surrounding circumstances and conditions; it is evident that what is wanted in a theory of progress is the laws by which these *immediate* factors of the problem—these human actions, human motives, surrounding conditions, and the like—are connected and related; not the mere fact that they follow from some remote, abstract, and impersonal law like that of Evolution. In a certain sense, it is true, we may say that everything that happens is a result or *effect* of the law of Evolution, but for all practical purposes it would be as useless to explain the progress of civilization by this law, as it would be to explain by it a disease of the chest, an earthquake, a stagnation in the cotton trade, or a rise in the value of gold. And thus it is that Spencer, by attaching the progress of civilization to a *remote*, abstract, and impersonal law of Nature, rather than to *immediate*, human, and concrete causes, has left the problem still unsolved.

But to give greater completeness to this historical estimate it is necessary, perhaps, that I should say a word or two here on Hegel's 'Philosophy of History.' Like Carlyle and Buckle, the aim of Hegel is to find the central and controlling factor in Civilization, but instead of finding it with Carlyle in the spiritual forces of man, his imagination and heart; or with Buckle in the laws of the material world and the progress of Physical Science; he finds it in the necessary and inevitable movement of Thought itself, which in all its kingdoms, whether spiritual, scientific, or practical, is ever one and the same—a continuous movement of integration and differentiation circling without break in an ascending spiral up and up to higher and higher planes. Now this is precisely the same movement on the *spiritual* side that Spencer has formulated on its *physical* side in the Law of Evolution—the movement, viz., from the simple to the complex, from the incoherent to the coherent, from the indefinite to the definite, so that plant the human spirit where you may, it will be impelled by the cravings of the *intellect* to break up what is blurred and indistinct in the outline of things about it, into differentiation and distinctness,

like nebulae resolved by a telescope of higher power into separate stars, and so return to itself again enriched with wider and finer, more accurate and more coherent thought. In like manner the same spirit impelled by the cravings of the *senses and heart* will search out arts, comforts, and conveniences better and better adapted to meet its needs, as well as political arrangements more and more fitted to give range and expansion to its contracted life. And lastly, impelled by the cravings of its *spiritual* nature this same spirit must ever push forward and upward to ideals of religion and conduct, more elevated and more refined, more accurately shaded and adjusted to the finer and higher longings of the imagination and heart. The only real difference between Spencer and Hegel lies in this, that while Spencer taking his stand on *physical* evolution traces the progress of civilization chiefly on the side of the environment, of the visible and tangible world, Hegel on the contrary taking his stand on *mental* evolution follows it rather on the side of the invisible and spiritual world, and so is enabled to exhibit in a manner impossible to Spencer, the successive additions made to the Ideals of Man,—as well as to his mental emancipation, enlargement, and self-knowledge—by the great civilizations of the world—the Chinese, the Hindus, the Persian, the Greek, the medieval Catholic and Feudal, the modern Protestant and Democratic; and so on. But just as Spencer's Law of Evolution was, as we have seen, too large and general to be of any practical use in the solution of the special problem of Civilization, so too is Hegel's general law of the movement of Thought. For although, as we shall see farther on, he has justly pointed out that the *dynamic* and propelling factor in civilization, its soul and vital principle, is the Ideal in man,—the spirit of the Right, the Good, and the True, and although in many cases a full and general law exhibited the mechanism and level of the ideal, he has nevertheless failed to attempt to show its relation to the other factors of the problem, and to the elements of Time in which they all have to work, especially

to that *controlling* factor which is the break on the wheel of progress, viz., the Material and Social Conditions. And just as it helps us little to the understanding of the human body to be told that the brain is the efficient and active agent in its phenomena, unless at the same time we can be shown the threads of relation that connect it with all the organs, as well as all these with each other and with the whole ; so it forwards us but little towards the solution of the problem of Civilization to be told that the Ideal in Man—the spirit of Truth, of Justice, and of Love—is the real and dynamic force in human progress, unless at the same time it can be shown how and by what laws this factor is related to, is checked, controlled, or modified by, all the rest—by Religion, by Philosophy, by Government, by Science, by Material and Social Conditions. And hence it is that Hegel by concentrating his attention on the part played by a single factor to the neglect of all the rest, has like the other great thinkers whom we have passed under review left the problem of Civilization still to be solved.

The above are, perhaps, the most able attempts that have been made to solve the problem of human progress. But, notwithstanding the splendid powers to which these attempts bear witness ; notwithstanding, too, that in each of them some one or more sides of the problem have been developed with a richness and fertility of illustration that leave nothing to be desired ; still, as all-round theories of civilization, they are all, as we have just seen, more or less incomplete. The way, therefore, still remains open for a fresh attempt, to which, indeed, the subject itself invites us by its very reach and magnificence. If I should, therefore, be bold enough to venture to supplement the labours of predecessors so illustrious, it will rather be in the direction of giving greater unity and cohesion to the various factors of the problem, and of exhibiting more truly their essential interdependencies and relations, than of adding further to the very full and detailed historical researches which these thinkers have brought in support of their respective views.

For not only would this be beyond the scope of a section which from its necessary limits, must deal rather with principles than with details, but it would also run counter to the position which I took up in the chapter on History, viz., that the Past must not be allowed to dictate to the Present, but must be kept strictly in subordination to it, and that all historical results, except the most broad and general are to be regarded rather as appendage and illustration of principles drawn from a just insight into To-day, than as furnishing the main basis and support of these principles. My aim, therefore, shall be to give such a skeleton and outline of the progress of civilization as will exhibit clearly the great laws on which it depends with just sufficient illustration to show the relations and connexions of the great factors by which it is produced.

CHAPTER II.

THE CONTROLLING FACTOR.

AT the outset of this chapter, it is necessary to remark that no Theory of Civilization can have any coherence or vitality until the central and *controlling* factor is determined, that is to say, the factor to which we must address ourselves if we are to advance or retard it. On this very point, however, there is the widest difference of opinion, not only among those systematic thinkers who have grasped the subject in its entirety, but also among the great masses of men, who, although they may not consciously have formulated their opinions on the subject, nevertheless show by their actions and sympathies the direction of their thoughts. But these opinions, divergent though they be, will all fall into two broad categories. On the one hand, there are those who think that civilization is to be best advanced by primarily addressing the hearts and imagination of men, by appeals to their consciences, and exhortations to duty and self-sacrifice—or, in a word, *by the preaching of morality*; on the other hand are those who believe that it is to be best advanced by *ameliorating the material and social conditions of men*, in the belief that, out of the improved conditions, the higher morality will arise of itself. Speaking broadly, we may say that the Church represents the view that civilization is to be best advanced by the preaching of duty and morality: the State, the view that it is to be best advanced by improvement in men's material and social conditions. Now, as it is to the last of these views that I give my own firm adhesion, I have selected as representatives of the former view, not, as might perhaps be expected, theologians, whose opinions from the nature of the case might be discredited from the very outset,

but the two most powerful and profound of its philosophical exponents—Comte and Carlyle. Not that either of these distinguished thinkers altogether ignores those material and social conditions to which I attach so much importance, but, rather, that they believe the preaching of duty and morality to be the primary and efficient factor in Progress, while regarding encroachments in the material and social conditions as of but secondary and subordinate importance.

That Comte does not altogether ignore the influence exerted on Progress by the mode of distribution of material, political, and social power, is shown in the fact that in his scheme of polity, he advocates the Republican form of government as superior both to the Monarchical and Imperial forms, he proclaims the necessity of equal education, of personal freedom, of freedom of opinion, and the like. But, how comparatively subordinate in importance he considers these distributions of material and social power is seen in the way in which he ignores those political 'checks and balances,' which, to statesmen and political thinkers generally, are of supreme and paramount importance. Manhood-suffrage for example—as a defence against the abuse of power by one class over another; the ballot-box, as a defence against the abuse of power by one individual over another, the election of representatives by the people themselves, rather than by any one clique or section of the people; the more equitable distribution of wealth, and the like, he believes to be quite unnecessary. His reason is this—he regards Humanity in general, and each State in particular, not as an aggregate of individuals each of whom is to follow his own interests and what he calls his rights, but as an organism, in which classes and individuals have their own special duties and functions to perform. From this it follows necessarily that all portions of material and social property, even the individual, must be distributed in such a manner, that it may not be deprived of something to which it

interest or caprice, are to be regarded rather as public *trusts*, to be used for the public benefit. If this be the case, why then, should we be so anxious to have a vote to defend our rights, when the question is not what are our rights, but what is our duty? Why should we have a ballot-box to secure us from intimidation, when the object of all is not to suppress our opinion, but to get the free expression of it? Why should working-men and those who do not understand affairs, wish to have a voice in the management of these affairs, when those who do understand them are working, not against the working-man, but for him? But even supposing—which indeed he thinks to be improbable after so convincing an argument—that these different classes of men will not do their duty; that men of authority will not hold their position and talents, capitalists their property and wealth, and working-men their labour, for the public good, but for their own interests rather; what then is to be done? By reverting to the object he has in view, we shall anticipate his answer. His object, as we have seen, is to unite men and draw them together; not to make them independent of each other. Hence, instead of arming each individual or class with sufficient power—material, political, or social—to defend its own interests, as against the world, he would exhort all classes alike to do their duty in the name of that Humanity whom they serve, trusting to the pressure of an enlightened Public Opinion to bring the recalcitrants to submission. In this course he is strengthened by his doctrine, that Progress in the Past has been due to the exhortations to duty, morality, and self-sacrifice which religions have enjoined; and therefore that it is likely to be the same in the future. Fetishism, for example, he asserts to have given rise to the *moral union* between children born of the same parents, known as the Family; Polytheism, to that wider moral union between members of different families, constituting the City or State; and Catholic Monotheism, to that still wider union among the different States of

Europe, known as Christendom. And just as Progress in the Past consisted in the widening of this moral union from the Family to the State, and from the State to Christendom; so Progress in the Future will consist in extending this union, so as to embrace all nations, tribes, and conditions of men. And, further, as in the past these results have been attained by the preaching of duty and morality, in the name of the gods of the different religions; so, in the future, like results will be attained by preaching morality and duty in the name of Humanity.

Let us now turn to Carlyle. Like Comte, he does not altogether deny the influence of material and social conditions on Progress; like him, too, he regards them as but of secondary importance; indeed, in his later days, this feeling grew so strong with him that he could not speak of them but with contempt. He admits, it is true, that adjustments of material and political power between the various classes of a nation are sometimes useful, and even necessary; but, believing with Comte, that the State is an organic whole, in which each man should be bound to his neighbour by duty and affection, and not an aggregate of commercial Ishmaelites each with his hand against his neighbour, he trusts more to direct appeals to the hearts and consciences of men (with the occasional and judicious use of the rod in obdurate cases) than to any indirect benefit likely to arise out of ameliorations in their conditions of life. In support of this, he tells us that all the great World-movements that have announced new eras and epochs have been due, in point of fact, not to any *material* rearrangements of political, material, or social forces, however carefully and skilful, but to the *direct* agency of direct appeals to the great primary elements of man's nature, his Love, wisdom, ethicality, religion. Was not Christianity, forsooth, due to a moral revolution, the direct product of the apostles? Were the Crusades not due to the religious fervour of the monks; the French Revolution to the enthusiasm of the clergy?

Country, Right? If, then, the Progress of the World is due to these high *moral* influences, we shall not be surprised to learn that he holds all such low *mechanical* contrivances as ballot-boxes, extensions of the suffrage, political emancipation, liberty, equality, and the like, in even greater contempt than Comte. Ballot-boxes and extensions of the suffrage, he contends, can only make men more independent of each other; whereas, his object is to bind them more closely together. And, unless you can emancipate yourself from your 'pot of heavy-wet,' what, he asks, is the use of your 'liberty to do as you please?' To emancipate a slave as a remedy for the tyranny of an unjust master is the last thing that would occur to him. If the master maltreated his slave, he would exhort him to be more just and humane; if that did not do, he would depose him. If the slave did not do his duty to his master, he would also exhort him, and, if that failed, he would whip him. Between exhorting, on the one hand, and whipping, or, in the last resort, shooting, on the other, the whole of Carlyle's political and social philosophy lay. For the maintenance of order he would rely on the whip; but, for progress, on exhortations to duty and morality. Such is the desperate alternative to which Carlyle is reduced, through having lost faith in the steady growth of virtue and civilization which follows the removal of the hardships and disabilities of man's material, political, and social lot.

Now, to this doctrine of Comte, Carlyle, and, indeed, of the religious world generally—the doctrine that Civilization *i.e.*, the progress of men *in the mass*, and not of the *individual*, is to be forwarded rather by exhortations to duty and morality, than by the gradual amelioration of the material and social conditions of men—I desire to offer the most strenuous opposition. So important, indeed is it that the point should be scientifically determined (not only as being the preliminary to any coherent Theory of Progress, but as being the indispensable guide to all true Action) that no stone should be

left unturned to bring the matter to a definite issue. My own endeavour, accordingly, shall be to give reason and support to my strong conviction that all exhortations to duty and morality, and to elevation and expansion of mind, in the face of material and social conditions adverse to the growth of these virtues, are a waste of time and human energy, and are as absurd as to expect a rich and vigorous fruitage from trees or plants in spite of adverse conditions of soil. The total result depends, it is true, on the quality of the plant, as well as on the condition of the soil, on the quality of the men as well as on their conditions of life, but then, to alter the quality of the plant, the quality of the race of men, is beyond human power, except through the slow and indirect process of enriching the soil, of ameliorating the conditions of life out of which the higher virtues are to grow. And, moreover, so unconsciously do men act on this principle in their ordinary life, that it would be at once admitted, were it not for the religious sentimentalism and partiality with which the opposite view is regarded. My immediate aim, therefore, shall be to lift the question entirely out of this slough of prejudice and sentimentalism, and place it on a firm and rational basis.

In the first place, then, you will observe that parents act on this principle of the intimate dependence of morality on the conditions of life, when they make it their most serious concern to withdraw their children from bad influences and temptations, and place them under conditions and surroundings favourable to the growth of morality, in the sure belief that in the long run the influence of the material and social surroundings is more potent than any exhortation. Government, again, acts on this principle when, repugnance with the slave property, solely prevailing, it takes the morality of the people to its own hands, and seeks to elevate it by improving the condition of the poor and educating the children, by abolishing the slave trade, and by raising the price of cotton and sugar. The Press

does homage to this principle when it assures the Peace-preservation Society, with a sneer, that it may preach its high and beautiful ideal till the crack of doom, but that there will be no chance of its realization until the general condition of Europe—material and social—is already prepared for it. The Americans acted on this principle when they ruptured by force the bonds of the slave; knowing well that, notwithstanding the ministers who preached, and the slave-owners who accepted the Gospel of Christ, and his last and greatest commandment to love one another, no justice, no expansion of mind and heart, could befall the slave under conditions so harsh and unequal. Even the serfs of the Middle Ages could be set free as a body, only when the slow changes that had been going on in their material condition had made them dangerous, and their quickly successive risings in many countries had made their emancipation a political necessity. Until then, not all the preaching of the omnipotent Catholic Church could avail. Carlyle, as we have said, declares that it was by high exhortation and appeal that the necessary enthusiasm was generated, whereby were inaugurated and carried through to their successful issues those great epoch-making movements of the world—the Christian Religion, the Crusades, the Reformation, and the French Revolution. Now, although my admiration for enthusiasm in general, lies far on this side of infinitude, regarding it, as I do, as worthy rather of animals that go in herds, than of human souls walking solitary and erect in the self-contained dignity of their essential natures, I nevertheless cheerfully acknowledge its immense importance as a motor power in human affairs, and admit the splendid sacrifices to which when once it is kindled it frequently gives rise. I have observed, however, that it is not to be aroused by appeals to mere abstract morality, however noble and transcendent, but only by appeals to such wants, sympathies, and aspirations as are on a *level* with men's stage of material and social progress. The Christian religion, for example, arose out of the wants of the

time; falling on the desiccated hearts of the weary and down-trodden like dew; opening up to the enslaved the hope, perhaps even in their own lifetime, of that kingdom of Christ wherein there was neither bond nor free; and offering to the refined and pure in heart, in the midst of the abominations associated with the Pagan deities, an object of adoration that was holy and without sin. With minds thus prepared, a spark only was necessary to wake into burning enthusiasm, hearts on whom the sublimest preaching of the high and moral Plato would have fallen cold and dead. The Crusades, too, arose out of the wants of the time, the men of that age seeing in them the consummation of their dearest ideals, ambitions, and hopes. Had it not been so, Peter the Hermit might have gone on exhorting to this hour, 'the rapt soul,' as Carlyle says, 'looking through the eyes of him,' but with as little effect as if he had exhorted those rude and rapacious barons to go, sell all, and give to the poor—to lay down their arms and cease from bloodshed and rapine. The Reformation arose out of the wants of the time, and the men of that age saw in it the consummation of their dearest ideals, ambitions, and hopes.

the material and social conditions, and not, as so many believe, moral exhortation and appeal, rests on a profounder basis than any mere catalogue of instances,—on the law, viz, *that in this world things make their own relations, that is to say, their own morality*, in spite of politicians or priests. Now, should this turn out to be a true law, it will not only settle *speculatively* the basis on which civilization rests, but will also furnish a *practical* guide for action. Its importance, therefore, cannot be overestimated. For if the moral relationships of the great masses of men—their ideals, opinions, and habits of thought—grow directly out of their conditions of life, it is evident that, instead of sitting invoking a lofty morality which will prove as obstinate as the fire invoked by the priests of Baal, it behoves us, rather, to set to work resolutely to bring about that amelioration in the material and social conditions without which the higher morality cannot arise. The reader will therefore, I trust, permit me to indicate some of the regions of life in which this great and important law is manifest.

In the first place, then, we all know that the chemical elements, for example, make their own laws in spite of our wishes; and that the ways in which they will combine depend entirely on their own secret affinities and repulsions. In the same way, too, as Goethe has so well portrayed in his *Elective Affinities*, marriage makes its own laws; and, although religion and the customs of society may compel an outward decorum, the inner spiritual relations between a man and his wife will be determined by their respective natures, in spite of the prayers of parents or the invocations of priests. Commerce, again, makes its own laws, not only in a *material* sense—supply and demand adjusting themselves to each other, in spite of the appeals of moralists and philanthropists—but *morally* also; for did the law not interpose its vigilance, the number of knaves would bear as accurate a proportion to the number of dupes as supply does to demand. Crime makes its own laws; highway robberies dying out only when improvements in the arts of life,

by facilitating detection, made it too risky for men to pursue this nefarious calling. Belief, even, makes its own laws, in spite of exhortations to faith; all kinds of superstitions and impostures—religious, medical, and popular—dying out more and more as the light of advancing knowledge penetrates the great body of the people. Indeed, look where we will, we shall see that our morality, our moral ideas, our practical beliefs, all grow out of our *material and social surroundings*. In England, for example, so firmly do we (who are accustomed from our infancy to see men distributed into a hierarchy of classes) believe that a man's calling practically sums up the inventory of his mind and character, that by most of us it is regarded as practically final. When we learn that a man is a nobleman, a professional man, a mechanic, a small tradesman, a policeman, or the like, we feel that we know the essential point about him, and can, without much loss or injustice, dispense with further particulars. It has been frequently observed that people living in the country differ in their sentiments and sympathies from people living in the town. Even the fact that a man has a wife and family makes him look at life from a more or less different standpoint from those who are without these ties, makes him lay a different emphasis on certain duties and obligations, and impels him to treat seriously, rules of the moral law which before his marriage he held lightly or altogether ignored. Society makes its own laws; and you will observe that its condition at any given time determines the character of the Government and the legislation it will obey. If the mass of the people are educated, independent, and self-reliant, the Government can gather to itself but little power, if they are brutal, ignorant, or craven-hearted to help themselves, the good and great will call in vain for liberty. Every man who trusts his trust, shirks his responsibilities, or breaks the law, helps to tighten the ropes and the rack of his neighbor, takes taxes out of his pocket and contributes to his police, and ultimately to the power of the oppressor. And hereby,

Property makes its own laws, and, as most men own more or less personalty, there is little difficulty in getting the commandment, 'Thou shalt not steal,' generally respected; but landed property being the heritage of the few, cries of confiscation are heard on all hands; the exhortations to morality apparently having but little effect, and landlords in their selfishness not perceiving until it is almost too late that, if you wish men to respect the property of others, you must, if possible, give them a little for themselves.

How true it is, that *things in this world make their own morality*, will be still further seen if we take a broad oversight of society in general. So great, indeed, is the unity and intimacy, the harmony and proportion, existing among the various social and moral products of any given epoch, that, accompanying a particular stage of culture, you may confidently predict a corresponding stage of manners, of customs, of morality, of religion. For, just as in those old geological periods, when vegetation was on a gigantic scale, so likewise was animal life—the monsters of the forest being contemporaneous with the corresponding monsters of the land and deep, the megatheria, ichthyosauri, and the like—so with brutal customs, brutal sports, brutal indulgences, there will always be found brutal duties, brutal punishments, brutal religious rites: the very heroisms and sensuous mortifications of men assuming a coarse and brutal form. No one of these can burst the fetters by which it is reined in, and start forward on an independent course of its own, but each must wait for the rest to come up into line, prior to a general advance; and all are controlled by the material and social conditions. So preponderating, indeed, is the central genius of the world, that all undue elevations or depressions that may chance to arise are quickly incorporated and lost in the general mass, and whirled into the general rotundity. But, as culture advances, a general amelioration and expansion takes place all along the line. Not only does knowledge draw after it, as we have

already seen, a change in religion, but it precipitates from itself a world of new arts, inventions, comforts, and conveniences, which, by altering the relations in which men stand to each other, breed new customs and ways of life, new morals and habits of thought; these, again, react on religion and modify the attributes of the duties, which, again, are reflected back on human affairs, and modify human conceptions of morality—of rewards, punishments, and the like. But knowledge itself, which seems as if some lucky discovery might almost enable it to jump, as it were, into the sky, is really confined by the same adamantine barriers of necessity; no department being able to advance until all its auxiliaries have come up. The laws of astronomy, for example, had to wait for their discovery until the telescope had been invented; the laws of life till the microscope; and both telescope and microscope, again, had to wait for the discovery of the laws of optics. The laws of mechanics, of chemistry, of heat, and electricity had to be discovered, before we could get those great inventions which have been the glory of the present century—the telegraph and the steam-engine; and these, again, had to arrive before it was possible to get that sub-division of labour and distribution of its products, that general diffusion of knowledge and intelligence, which have so far equalized the conditions of life for the great masses of men as to have prepared the way for a still further advance. And thus, while the world rolls on to its destiny, without leaps or relapses, round and full in all its parts, as each stage of its evolution it breeds its own morality, its own habits of thought, and life.

But nothing will so fully enable us to realize how completely the morality, progress, and civilization of the world are determined by its material and sensible conditions, as these have to attain at any given time and place, the ideal that the existing state of these conditions will warrant. It is an ideal, for example, quite in accord with modern habits of thought, that all men should have a fair and equal chance for the realization of their

talents, and that the best places should fall to the best men. Why, then, can we not get the 'supremely Able Man' at the head of affairs, as Carlyle so earnestly desired? The answer is, because of the obstacles presented by the *existing* material and social conditions. In the first place, there is no machinery at present existing whereby you could be sure of having found the best man; and, in the second place, even if you were sure you had secured him, you could not get people to believe he was the best man, unless he were surrounded by those factitious advantages of wealth, position, or title, in which his natural fitness must needs be clothed before it could catch the imaginations of men. Among ourselves, indeed, with the *Times* and other public guides hounding on the 'Philistines,' and advising them not to hesitate to choose foxhunters and aldermen before any thinker or writer however exalted, it would be next to impossible. And, even were all these difficulties removed, the ideas of the 'Great Man' would have to run in line with the interests, aims, and ideas of the great body of the people, or, were he Solon himself, he must dismount and abdicate. Again, what higher form of government can there be than that in which the people manage their own affairs, with just enough officialism to keep the peace and do justice between all classes? Why, then, have the nations groaned under the public and private tyranny and extortions of emperors and kings for thousands of years? The answer, as before, is—the material and social conditions. The Roman world would have fallen to pieces from internal dissension, had not supreme power been placed in the hands of one man, who, although often using his power for base and personal ends, was nevertheless able to restrain the dissensions of lawless and rapacious patricians, and keep the peace among a number of heterogeneous nationalities ready to pounce on one another; thereby saving the Empire from those greater evils of anarchy, civil war, and political dismemberment, which would otherwise have inevitably ensued. And as for the hereditary principle of

kingship, although affording, perhaps, the worst of all chances for finding the man most capable of governing, it nevertheless gave order and stability, in times when to have put up the government for competition, would have been to face the certainty of civil war, with all its attendant horrors and atrocities. Besides what chance was there of getting rid of emperors and kings when you had to reckon with a public opinion which believed that these same emperors and kings were heaven-descended, and ruled by a 'right divine' not to be questioned by man. Can anything, again, be more right and natural than that character and virtue should take the highest place in public and private esteem? Why, then, do they, in this country, for example, take a lower social status than wealth and title founded on the ownership of land? In the first place, because of the practical impossibility of estimating with certainty in any given case what character and virtue there may be in a man; whereas, wealth and title are palpable and patent to all, and can be appraised without difficulty. In the second place, because, even were it possible to read the height of a man's virtue in his face, as we do the degrees of heat in a thermometer, still, virtue in its naked state is not what men actually love most to honour; on the contrary, where the material and social power is, there will admiration be centred, and qualities that are so cheap and common that, like charcoal, any old woman may possess them, cannot catch the vulgar imagination like distinctions which, from their rarity and splendour, have come, like diamonds, to fetch a very different price in the market. Again, is not a high state of education, refinement and culture, throughout the whole range of society, an ideal which all higher minded men love to contemplate? Why, then, has it not been realised? The answer still lies in the material as I have already shown the fact that while the great mass of men have to spend the hard-earned day in degrading bodily labours, a general culture and refinement are impossible. But even were this obstacle

removed, another obstacle equally formidable would delay the realization of our ideal. For were the wisdom of the ages to be doled out in penny newspapers, in the present state of culture the majority would not have interest enough to read it; what they would read being of a kind that would not raise them in the scale of culture, but would leave them where they are. And thus it is that the triumph of political liberty, the apotheosis of character, intellect, and virtue, the universal diffusion of education and culture—all of which are ideals the future has to realise—are delayed by reason of the obstacles presented by existing material and social conditions, and by the ideas and habits of thought bred of these conditions. Indeed, the longer I live the more clearly I perceive that, when there is any ideal which everybody wishes to see realised, but towards which no active step is taken, the reason is, either that under the circumstances it is impossible to get it, or that the difficulties that would have to be removed would cause more harm than the good that would accrue. Men wanted to know all about the stars long before it was possible that they could know about them; they wanted to be transported from place to place more quickly than was possible. But when the telescope and locomotive engine were invented, the impossible became possible, even actual. In the same way, there are many laws which everybody would like to see enacted, but which cannot be passed, either because in the existing material and social conditions there is no machinery to enforce them, or because the machinery, in its working, would do more harm than good. We all want peace, but cannot have it so long as boundaries are unsettled, race antipathies active, and national self-interests strong. We all want truth, but those sides and aspects of it which have to pass through the seven-fold diffracting media of self-interest, prejudice, bigotry, tradition, pride, authority, and self-love, are not likely soon to be reached.

Mark, too, how men's *Ideals* (and, in consequence, what they will imitate and aspire to) are bred immediately of their

Material and Social Conditions. In the early history of the world, when tribes and peoples had to bend all their energies to conquering other tribes or preventing themselves being conquered by them, the power of aggression and self-defence became the most important circumstance in the life of the tribe. The fighting man was, of necessity, the hero and beautiful—the one that was most loved, admired, and emulated. On the other hand, the physically weak, however high in mind or character, was despised, hated, or ignored. As these tribes became by conquest gradually welded into nations and empires, in consequence, became more organized—to wit, cunning, and diplomatic power shared with personal prowess the esteem of men, until now, in countries like America, that have no foreign policy and little apprehension of war, the mere soldier is held in but little regard, the higher ideals of business sagacity and shrewdness, knowledge of the world and practical ability, holding the first place in the admiration of the great body of the people. And thus we see that, in each instance, the qualities that are most admired and the deeds that are thought most honourable, follow directly out of the necessities of man's material and social conditions. An indignant friend of mine, disgusted that men's ideas which should be infinite and free are the slaves of the basest material necessities, declares that if the safety of the Empire depended on the man that could stand longest on his head, not only would that man be regarded as the greatest national benefactor—whom would be just—but his particular talent would, in the vulgar estimate, preclude all intellectual ability, however superior his real endowments.

Not only is the law that the necessities of life create a true law, but it is the one that is everywhere practically followed. Did I learn, as I am told, that a certain philosopher said, 'I judge the good or evil of all actions solely by the answers they gave to my question as to these—namely, does the execution of the act, if it is followed as fully as

appointed; by whom and on what tenure are judges and magistrates elected; is the Church dependent on the State or independent of it; in whose hands are the appointments to the high offices of the Army and Civil Service; how are the penalties of crimes graduated; what machinery exists for the detection of crime; what Classes are to possess the franchise, and the like? Is it not the aim of wise statesmanship to have the various *material and social interests and powers* in the community so fairly represented, that no one shall unduly preponderate, but that there shall be a fair chance of justice being done all around; none but *doctrinaires* dreaming that, without these 'checks and balances,' the great ends of public and private justice can be secured by merely leaving them to the *individual conscience*, or by appeals to mere *morality*? It is the same, too, in our private affairs; the great questions regarding the *individual*, being—have you money or authority, or not? are you in a position of command or obedience, of dependence or independence? the answer determining the relation in which we shall stand to you and the attitude we shall assume.

How little, indeed, men practically regard all mere exhortations to morality, when their material and social position is secure, is seen in the fact that while the good and patient old Church goes thrashing out her well-worn platitudes from Sunday to Sunday on the beauty of humility, and wreaks her empty denunciations on pride and other aristocratic sins, men of wealth and title—in whose eyes, be it observed, this self-same pride is the particular jewel to which wealth and title minister, and for which, indeed, they exist—continue to repose in peace in their luxuriant pews, knowing well that their dearly-beloved pride need fear no humiliation so long as they can keep the land and title out of which it is perennially renewed; but when men of insight, leaving the Church to go her own way, strike at morality through the material and social conditions, and propose to alter the tenure of land on which this whole superstructure of pride and precedence rests,

the affrighted lords perceiving that the ark has at last been touched, start in terror from their repose, as if some ominous raven had appeared in the sky, boding ill to all.

We might go on multiplying indefinitely illustrations of the principle above enunciated, but enough will, I trust, have been adduced to show that *in this world things make their own morality*; and that, therefore, the material and social conditions of men are, if not the sole cause, at least the *controlling factor* in Civilization and Progress.

CHAPTER III.

THE EQUALIZATION OF CONDITIONS.

THE next question that naturally arises is, what special *change* takes place in the Material and Social Conditions to render a further advance in Civilization possible at any given point? Now, to answer this question aright, it is desirable, perhaps, at the outset to get a clear idea of what an advance in civilization really means. If, therefore, we consider the various stages through which the world has passed in its progress from barbarism up to the present time, we shall find that the movement of what is called civilization has been along two distinct lines—the one, an upright *vertical* line, the other a lateral *horizontal* one. The upright vertical movement is seen in the gradual rise of men's *ideals* from that prowess and mere brute courage which was the ideal in the early life of all peoples (and still is so in the lowest savage races), up through the times when military strategy, cunning, and diplomacy shared with personal courage men's admiration, onward to the present day, when the most serious sections of the most civilized nations have as their ideal, that intellectual power, which, in its many different aspects, has produced all that is great and admirable in civil and national life. Except among the lowest savage races, and the lowest class in civilized communities, mere physical prowess as an ideal may be said to have completely passed away; the military ideal, too, with all its accompaniments, is fast dying out, in spite of its temporary recrudescence among some of the foremost nations, owing to material and political necessities; and now, mental power, in its many various applications, whether as practical wisdom, political sagacity, artistic, literary, or philosophical power, is

supreme. But, besides this *upward* movement which characterizes advancing civilization—the rise in men's *ideals*—we note a *lateral* horizontal movement, as seen in the more equitable administration of justice, the wider area for intellect and character, the wider distribution of wealth the wider diffusion of knowledge, the wider extension of liberty and equality. Carrying with us this double movement—viz., the *upward* rise of *Ideals*, and the *lateral* extension of *Justice and Right*—as that by which advancing civilization is characterized it will be expedient, if we wish to find out what changes take place in the material and social conditions of the world to render successive advances in civilization possible, to follow the rule laid down in the chapter on History, and instead of groping blindly through the mazes of historical detail to look rather for the clue to what we want, in the world of to-day—in the full assurance that if we can discover the conditions that render progress possible to-day, in a world which we know and can directly inspect, the same must have been true in the days of Moses, of Cæsar, of Charlemagne—days that we cannot directly inspect, and that we do not, and can never really

their concentrated superiority of power can defeat them in detail, but that when once combined, they will have put themselves so far on an *equality of power* with their masters, as to negotiate with them on more equal terms. And that Trade Unions have not only increased the wages of the working-man, but have also greatly increased his political influence, no one, I think, can seriously doubt. The question whether there shall be a 'strike' or 'lock-out' in any large branch of industry depends now, not so much on the abstract justice of the demand (for, after all, in any case in which both parties must be influenced by self-interest, which of them is to decide what is right?) as on the opinion of the respective parties on such questions as these :—how long can the masters hold out ; how long can the men ; how important is it that the work in hand should be finished ; can others be brought in to replace those who go out ; and the like. It is now generally admitted that the Land League, by encouraging and supporting the tenants in their refusal to pay unjust rents, helped materially in gaining justice for Ireland. Since the Indian Mutiny, it is said that the religious and other prejudices of the natives have been more respected than formerly. And historians have confessed that the successive risings of the serfs in the different European countries, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, did more to abolish serfdom and mitigate its hardships, than all the centuries of exhortation of the Roman-catholic Church. The conscience of the *individual* is no myth, and high virtue and renunciation are found everywhere, among all classes, and in all countries ; but to expect that the pure rays of truth and justice will be able to penetrate (when opposed to self-interest) the horny opacity which always characterizes the consciences of men united into classes, corporations, or guilds, by any *preaching* of morality and justice, is a dream.

It is the same between individuals as it is between classes and nations. There is no blinking the fact, that unless we can find either in law, public opinion, or our own resources, some

power on which we can rely in our needs, some power which will put us on *equal* terms with our adversaries, we feel as if naked and at the mercy of the elements, and cannot rest until we have found in some ally the needed counterpoise. In the early days of California, when the public law was not sufficient to protect from injustice, and when, owing to the shifting and uncertain manner of life, there was no recognised 'code of honour' to which men could appeal, professional gamblers on sitting down to play placed their revolvers on the table by their sides; and so, by *equalizing* the risks to which each one by dishonesty was exposed, practically superseded the necessity for the use of the weapons. We all feel how unfavourable is material and social *inequality* to that higher intercourse which is necessary to mental and moral expansion. Indeed it is one of the commonest observations, that the constant intercourse of superiors and inferiors is detrimental to the highest mental and moral interests of both, either by crushing originality on the one hand, or by leading to self-satisfaction on the other, and that only in the society of *equals* can we find that atmosphere which the more delicate qualities of our nature require for their growth and expansion. What chance could there have been for the slave to develop those higher qualities of the mind in which civilization consists, while the material and social relations between himself and his master were so unequal? Even the filial relation itself, strong as it undoubtedly is, cannot altogether be trusted; for it is frequently observed that parents, when they grow too old for work, feel more comfortable in the possession of an income that will ensure their independence, than in relying on filial affection alone.

But enough of instances drawn from the Present. Let us now return to the Past, and there, too, we shall find, as was to be expected, that each advance in Civilization has been rendered possible only by the *equalization* of the Material and Social Conditions.

The earliest condition of mankind, of course, being that of

in fable; but recent researches and the analogies furnished by savage tribes in our own day, afford good ground for believing that the primitive man wandered apart with his wife and family, living by fishing and hunting, knowing no law but his own will, acknowledging no authority but that of physical strength, and as regardless of human life as of that of the animals he killed for food. From this primitive condition where Brute Force was the only law, the first advance towards a rude civilization would naturally begin, when the presence of a common enemy, animal or human, rendered some kind of union between these wandering families necessary for the common defence. For this a certain mutual confidence was absolutely essential; as all power of action would be frittered away if each man had to live under the constant suspicion that his own life was not safe from the treachery of his neighbour, or his wife and chattels from the dishonesty of those left behind to guard them. Now, as from the necessity of the case no such confidence was possible, the power to enforce the necessary honesty and self-restraint, and to protect each from the treachery of his fellows, would naturally be placed in the hands of the man chosen as Chief; who would punish the dishonest, restrain the violent, and interpose his personal power to protect the weak and defenceless. In this way all disputes would naturally come in time to be settled by the personal arbitrament of the Chief himself, and not by the old methods of physical force. And thus a rude form of Justice would be established, and those moral obligations which could never arise so long as men's lives and fortunes were at the mercy of brute strength and passion, would have a chance to take root and grow. Among those nomadic tribes, again, which we everywhere meet with in the East at the beginning of recorded history, justice is administered in a rough and summary way by the Patriarch who, in theory at least, is the oldest descendant of the common ancestor of the tribe. And as these nomadic tribes settle into independent towns, justice is still administered,

as we read in the Old Testament, by the King in person sitting at the gate. Coming to modern times, when from detached chieftains with their followers a nation arises, the King makes peregrinations from place to place, as Sir Henry Maine relates of our own King John, hearing complaints and administering justice. But when, at last, from the natural growth of nations, together with the incorporation in them of conquered peoples, it became impossible for any one man to transact all the business in person, the work had to be delegated to subordinates appointed by the king. Now this necessity, which took the administration of justice out of the hands of the King in person, was the main condition by which it was purified and made more impartial. For while the King sat in person, Justice was rough and summary, and too often coloured by prejudice, passion, and self interest; but when his delegate took his place, unwritten laws and customs became embodied in written and definitive codes, Law became more equable and precise, and as the interpreter dared show no bias, could be applied to all alike, without passion, prejudice, or self-interest. The old Roman proconsuls were not, as might appear, an exception to this rule. It is quite true that they regarded the provinces of the Empire much in the same way as the old Anglo-Indian proconsuls of last century regarded India, viz., as a rich field for plunder. But these proconsuls, it must be remembered, were not the delegates of a common Superior whose interest it was, when not personally concerned, to do justice to all classes of his subjects alike; but were rather members of the ruling class sharing the spoils between them. For, when the Empire replaced the patrician Senate, and the provincial governors became responsible to the Emperor himself, this private extortion and corruption had to cease; and for many ages, indeed until the Empire began to decline, justice was much more purely administered. The next step higher in the administration of justice was taken when the affairs of nations became so wide and complex that the great principle of the division of labour

had to be applied to Law itself, as to all other matters, and the judicial authority had to be separated from the executive, and placed on a distinct independent footing. Then began that scientific study of the law by a special class, from which resulted that finer equity and procedure, that finer analysis of crime and motive, that finer adjustment of punishment to offence, in which modern scientific judicature consists.

The above is a rough outline of the way in which Justice has advanced to higher and higher stages of purity and precision during the long progress of civilization. But what I want to point out here, is, that these successive advances in justice and morality were rendered possible only by the successive *equalization* of the Material and Social Conditions. Unless, for example, the weak man could command the power of the Chief, so as practically to put himself on an *equality* of power with the strong man, it is evident that disputes would never have been referred to arbitrament, but would have continued to be decided, as before, by brute strength alone; and so the first step in civilization would have been rendered impossible. Again, it is still further evident, that, unless men's causes could be removed from the *personal* arbitrament of a chief or king, with its incident liability to be distorted by prejudice, passion, or self-interest, to the pure and *impersonal* decision of a written code, and so the conditions of the decision be rendered *equal*, the finer kinds of justice would have been impossible; just as it is in the undisturbed air of the study that you judge the real weight of the orator's argument, and not while listening to his voice and under the influence of his presence and personality. How true, indeed, it is that there can be no rise in morality and civilization until the material and social conditions are equalized, may be seen in those great historical cataclysms which from time to time have thrown the civilized world back into barbarism, and those backward parts of the world which remained in barbarism long after all around was civilized. One or two of the more striking of these

instances will, I trust, serve to make the truth apparent. When the Roman Empire, for example, went down under the incursions of the Barbarians, an analogous state of things was brought about to that which characterized primitive society. The face of the Empire was dotted over with rude warriors, each living separate from the rest, knowing no law but his own will, and acknowledging no authority but that of brute force. The fact that, instead of wandering about in isolated *families* from place to place in search of food, they were aggregated into isolated *groups*, each made up of chief, retainers, and menials, does not affect the general analogy; on the contrary, it strengthens the conclusions we wish to draw. For the result of this condition of things was as might have been anticipated—there was no law but that of brute force, no test of right but the ‘trial by combat,’ no proof of innocence but the ordeal by water and hot iron. And what I desire especially to point out is the fact, that, in spite of the continued and persistent efforts of the Church and the trading community to introduce legal forms in the place of private war; in spite, too, of the ‘Truce of God,’ which gave a moment’s breathing-time between the successive combats; this barbarous condition continued unabated, until one of the larger fiefs, taking advantage of the prestige and power which the support of the Church and of the rising Communes gave it, was able to make itself, first, the arbiter *between contending fiefs, and afterwards, master of them all*; and so, by *equalizing* the conditions of all alike, made it possible and expedient to substitute the forms of law for private war and personal revenge. It was the same, too, with the borderland of England and Scotland, which, owing to the want of a common authority, to *equalize* the conditions of both sides, remained in a state of barbarism for centuries after other parts of the kingdom were reposing in peace and security under equal law. There, too, and in the Highlands down to an even later date, as in primitive society, raiding and counter-raiding

were the serious occupation of life, might was the only right, and human life was of as little account as that of the cattle which they drove to and fro in their midnight excursions. And there, also, this condition of things continued unchanged until the Crowns of the two kingdoms were united in one person; and so, the conditions of all alike being *equalized* by coming under a common authority, all alike found it expedient to settle their differences by the peaceful forms of law. Even at the present time, the same midnight marauding is a constant occurrence on the border-land of India and Afghanistan, and, indeed, may continue for an indefinite time, as no common authority is likely soon to arise to put it down.

In endeavouring thus to show how Justice and Morality have been rendered more precise and equable in the onward progress of Civilization, the reader will have observed that I have assumed, hypothetically, and for sake of simplicity, that society has been of one *homogeneous* texture throughout. This, of course, is not the fact; on the contrary, during the greater portion of recorded history, society has been broken up into 'classes, separated by dividing lines as distinct almost as those which separate nation from nation. In Europe this was the result of conquest; the barbarian chieftains who over-ran the Roman Empire forming among themselves an aristocracy resting on material power, and degrading the old inhabitants to a condition of vassalage or serfdom. In the East, on the contrary, the division of society into Castes was founded on the despotism of the priestly class; whose influence, again, rested not directly on material power, but rather on a social power concentrated by a religious belief, more potent than arms of steel. The consequence, as we know, was that between these various 'classes' there was no equality of rights, privileges, or duties. What was virtue in the one class was not virtue in the other. The moral code of the Brahmin was not that of the Sudra; of the lord, that of the serf; of the master, that of the slave. The drunkenness that was a disgrace to the Spartan,

was not so to the Helot. The 'point of honour' which was essential to the 'gentleman,' was not essential to the peasant, while, on the other hand, the vulgar honesty demanded of the serf was despised by the lord. The life of a baron or bishop was assessed at a different figure from that of the vassal or serf. The Brahmin considered his own life worth that of twenty Hindoos. Extortion, murder, adultery, and theft were crimes when perpetrated on one another by members of the same class, but peccadilloes when perpetrated by the superior classes on the inferior. Even when at last a practical *equality* of rights and privileges was established between the different classes, the emperor or king still had his special exemptions. He could do no wrong, and, as in the case of the Roman Emperors, could kill, debauch, imprison, and confiscate, with impunity, and at his own sweet will. Even in America where there is a broad and general equality, the line is still drawn between the whites and the weak or servile sections of the community—the negroes, half castes, and Indians. But what I have specially to point out here is, that the gradual extension of justice, until in the most favoured nations it has swept away in a large degree all these barriers of class distinction, has been brought about by the gradual *equalization* of the material and social conditions. In the East, of course, there is as yet no approach to equality, either in the material or social conditions of the various classes, and, in consequence, the old *regime* remains practically unchanged from what it was centuries ago. In Europe and the West, on the contrary, the gradual approach to equality of power between the upper and lower orders, as bodies, brought about, first, personal liberty, and then political equality, and now nothing remains but that social inequality which we should know *a priori* must always more or less exist so long as there is any tangible inequality between individuals in material and intellectual power.

As the first great characteristic of advancing civilization—the diffusion and extension of equal justice, equal rights,

equal privileges, equal opportunities, from man to man, from class to class, from people to people—is rendered possible by the gradual *equalization* of the material and social conditions; so the second great movement that characterizes it, viz., the ascension of men's ideals from brute force, upwards to the coronation of intellect and virtue, is made possible only by the very same means, viz., the successive equalization of the material and social conditions on higher and higher planes.

We have already seen in a general way how Justice was rendered more precise and equable, more scientific and impersonal, between the members of the same community; and we have good ground for believing that a high degree of excellence in its administration was arrived at, at a very early period in the world's history. We should, perhaps have expected that the rise in men's *ideals* would have culminated with equal rapidity. But such was not the case. Law, order, justice, the respect for reason and for moral claims, were recognized between the individuals composing the same community or people long before they were recognized between the different communities or peoples. The antagonism of races and religions, the indeterminateness of areas and boundaries, absolutely *necessitated* ages of confused strife before such a *balance* of power could be arrived at as would afford time for peace to give stability and definiteness to landmarks, and the force of right to old prescription and custom. The consequence was, that the law of *might* continued to be the arbiter between contending nations, long after the law of *right* had firmly established itself between the individuals composing these nations. And as men's ideals and ambitions are bred of *national* necessities, the ideal of physical strength and military power dominated the world long after civilization had reached the point where such an ideal might naturally have been expected to disappear. We have already seen, that when men wandered about as separate families, with no weapons but the rudest, physical strength and courage were the most essential qualities for self-preservation,

and were, in consequence, admired more than aught else, as may be seen even at the present day among the savage races. As these families became united into tribes and peoples, powers of combination, of organization, and of foresight, became necessary in addition, and hence more or less of these qualities were indispensable in the popular heroes, as may be seen in the Homeric poems. As time went on, and the growth and complexity of society necessitated the division of labour, war became a separate profession, and the military class, except in the East and for special reasons, more or less subordinated all other classes of the community to itself. The seif, the peasant, the tradesman, the artisan all more or less existed for its convenience and aggrandizement. But from the time that gunpowder was invented, fire arms became accessible to all, and for the first time the physically weak were put on a practical equality with the physically strong. Physical strength could no longer be made a ground of distinction, and the result was, that although military power still remained the supreme object of ambition, personal prowess as such, from that time onwards ceased to be the main ideal of man. For it is a law of the human mind, that no thing can be made an ideal and object of ambition to men, unless it affords them a ground of distinction and inequality. In eating, drinking, walking, reading, the multiplication table, and the like, men can practically attain to an equal degree of excellence. These accomplishments afford no point of distinction, and cannot therefore be made an ideal or aim of life. In the same way, so long as men were physically *unequal*, physical strength offered a chance of distinction, and so could be erected into an ideal, but when fire arms practically equalized the weak and the strong, these distinctions became unimportant, and so dropped out of the line of men's serious ambitions, surviving, as so many things once useful have done, as sport or ornament merely. Personal prowess, then having ceased to be men's ideal rank and title following close behind, stepped into its place. Military

prestige, state-craft, and diplomacy were still the most indispensable concerns of nations, and therefore the most serious objects of aspiration; and rank and title being associated in men's minds with these high offices, furnished precisely that point of tangible *inequality* so necessary to draw on men's ambition, that point of *distinction* and exclusion not to be found in those pure intellectual and moral powers which any cowherd might possess. The consequence has been, that up to the present day in the old feudal countries of Europe, this distinction of rank, founded on inequalities of birth and fortune, fostered by sovereigns and courts, and accepted by the great body of the people in all humility, is the main ingredient in those composite qualities which now go to make up men's ideal. And when rank and title, too, shall give way to something higher, as physical prowess did before them, it will not be because the nobility themselves will renounce such claims. On the contrary, such is the baseness of the human mind, that there is no distinction, however impertinent, frivolous, or obsolete, but would be made a ground of superiority to all time, were there power to enforce it, or did men voluntarily submit to it. But, in this instance, those equalizing agencies which, as we have seen, have levelled so many past distinctions, are again at work, and will no doubt in time level distinctions of rank and birth also. Advancing knowledge and the diffusion of culture among all classes are gradually equalizing men's *social* conditions; the application of this knowledge to the arts of life, and the wealth accruing therefrom in industry, merchandise, mines, and ships, are gradually equalizing their *material* conditions. With social inequality levelled by advancing culture, and material inequality by advancing wealth, the Aristocracy will in time cease to be the ideal they have in all old countries for so many ages been. In the younger countries of the world, again, as in America and the Colonies, where these inequalities of birth and fortune have never existed, rank and title have never been a practical living ideal among the great body of the

people, money—rather, together with those intellectual and moral qualities that are involved in business trade, and practical affairs, being the most respected and adured. And if one were permitted to predict, one might venture to affirm, that when the money ideal too shall cease, and higher and purer intellectual and moral powers than those involved in trade and commerce shall become the ideal of men, this, too, like all the rest, will happen when existing material and social conditions shall be still further *equalized*, directly by the practical equalization and distribution of wealth among all classes, so that its possession no longer affords the ground of distinction that it does now, and indirectly, by the directness with which the pressure of public opinion may be brought to bear on all classes and conditions of men, whether for approbation or censure.

CHAPTER IV.

STATICS.

UP to this point we have seen that the Material and Social Conditions of the world are the immediate and determining factors in progress and civilization, and must be *equalized*, before, at any given stage, a further advance is possible. But as the object of this section of the work is to show, not the part played by one factor only, but by all the leading factors, I shall now return and endeavour to trace the separate influence of each, in order the better to see how they work in combination. And, in doing this, I shall merely summarize the results arrived at in preceding chapters, referring the reader to the chapters themselves for a more detailed exposition.

Broadly speaking, then, the factors in Civilization may be classed under four great heads, which, for the sake of clearness, I have arranged in the following order:—

1. Religion.
2. Material and Social Conditions.
3. Religion in its character as Philosophy.
4. Science—Physical and Mental.

And first, as to the effect of *Religion*. In a former chapter we saw that the true sphere of Religion was to *harmonize the mind* of man, by giving satisfaction to the cravings of the intellect, heart, and imagination, at every stage of his advancement. We saw that it satisfied the longing of the *intellect* to solve the problem of human existence and destiny, by giving to each nation or people, according to its stage of culture, a satisfactory answer as to the Cause of the world, and its relation to that Cause. We saw that it gave satisfaction to the *moral* and *emotional* nature, by holding out an *ideal world*, here or

elsewhere, in which every impulse and longing, every aspiration of the heart and soul, should have full and complete realization. To the longing for life and dread of annihilation, it held out a personal immortality; to the desire for sensuous gratification, a heaven of rich and various joys—of gardens and fruits, music and maidens, feasting, poetry, and song; to the pure in heart a world of high and sweet converse with the good and the blest, and the spirits of the just; and, lastly, to the down-trodden and oppressed of all ages, it opened up an ideal world of justice and freedom, where there should be no whips, no slaves, no masters, no war, no misery, no want, no subserviency—that *ideal* world of justice, goodness, love, peace, elevation and expansion of mind and heart, on which the mind loves to dwell for consolation and rest amidst the hardships of the *actual* world. We saw, also, that it enabled men to work, by giving them a sense of security and reliance—the sense that they were in the hands of a Power who would lead them in the right path, in a world where, as little was known, all things must wear a hostile or threatening aspect. And thus it is that Religion, like a father sitting out his son for school and college, equips man with those necessities of his spiritual nature, without which he would be unable to confront the tough world, and do the work to which he is appointed. It furnishes him with a philosophy of things, at a time when, from imperfect knowledge, it would be impossible for him to see through them for himself; it gives a complete and full prospective satisfaction to those longings and aspirations which can find but incomplete satisfaction in this world; and, in the midst of the dangers by which he is surrounded, and the thin tenure by which he holds this mortal life, gives him faith, and security, and rest. In a word, it satisfies the higher necessities of man's nature, and so leaves him free to cope with those enterprises and labours which confront him in his passing through Time.

The second great factor in C's

called the *Material and Social Conditions*. We have already seen that these conditions are the *controlling* factors in civilization; and that, until they are *equalized*, the civilization reached at any given point cannot further advance. I have now only to remark (what indeed has been already so abundantly shown) that these conditions are the *immediate* causes of those moral relationships existing between man and man, which are the finest criteria, perhaps, of the stage which civilization has reached in any given country. The material conditions give rise to the political; the material and political, to the social; the material, political, and social, to the moral. Climate, soil, population, and race, are the material conditions which give rise to the earliest inequalities between tribe and tribe, and people and people. The antagonism of these tribes, and the necessities of aggrandizement or self-defence, give rise to the earliest material and political inequalities within the tribe—the division of function and power between the chief and his followers. Conquest, and the incorporation of subjugated tribes, give rise to still further material and political inequalities; as shown in the hierarchy of emperors, kings, nobility, burgesses, menials, and slaves. These inequalities of material and political power give rise directly to those inequalities of social power embodied in such categories and distinctions as high and low born, cultured and uncultured, educated and illiterate, refined and vulgar. And out of these Social inequalities, in turn, have arisen, as we have seen in a former chapter, those moral inequalities of rights, privileges, duties, and obligations, which it is the end of civilization to remove. But besides being the immediate causes of those moral relationships that exist between man and man, the material and social conditions give rise to those ideals of excellence which so distinguish nations at different stages of their progress. These conditions, as we have seen, *directly* determine whether glory, patriotism, liberty, loyalty, luxury, wealth, or learning, shall be the supreme object of ambition or desire; and whether personal prowess,

military heroism, rank, birth, business sagacity, or the purer and higher forms of mental activity, shall be the qualities and attributes most emulated, esteemed, and admired.

We come now to the third great factor in Civilization, viz *Religion, in its character as Philosophy*

The true sphere and function of Religion is not, as we have seen, to affect men's *actions*, but to give rest and harmony to their *minds*. But the religions of the Past have all contained within them philosophies of the world around, and it is these philosophies which have incited men to action and played a definite part in civilization. I have already pointed out, that one of the great mental laws on which all religions are constructed is the law that when natural causes are unknown events are and must be ascribed to the agency of wills like our own, and further that it is this law which has not only necessitated the passage of the religions of the Past through the successive stages of Animism, Fetichism, Polytheism and Monotheism, but which still necessitates that the world as a *whole* (if not the relations of the *parts* which Science claims as her own exclusive field) shall be referred to some Supreme Intelligence—however difficult, or even impossible, it may be to realise the idea in thought. I have now still further to remark that this same law not only offered an explanation of the world in general, but also of the *particular* events and occurrences in the world around, which Science was unable at the time to explain. In a word, it was this law that necessitated that when the *scientific* cause of a phenomenon or event was not forthcoming, it must be ascribed to some will or deity, that is to say, to a religious cause. In this way it happened that Religion came to include within itself a Philosophy, and set itself up not only to harmonize the minds, but to guide the actions of men. Suppose, for example, that some calamity—a pestilence, a famine, or an earthquake—falls unexpectedly on a community not sufficiently advanced in scientific culture to be able to discover its natural cause. By the law of the human mind above

referred to, it must be ascribed to the agency of some will like their own; and, most naturally, to the anger or malevolence of some offended deity. And, as that anger can only be figured as arising either from the neglect of some of the ordinances instituted to do him honour; from jealousy of rival gods who have stolen the people's worship; or from the devil having been allowed to have too much his own way; it is evident that the only way of removing the effect, viz., the calamity, was by operating on the cause—viz., the offended deity. The most natural way of doing this was precisely what we know was done, viz., to appease and propitiate the deity by more liberal offerings, prayers, sacrifices, expiations, by more frequent attendance on the ordinances of religion, by making war on the peoples worshipping rival gods, and by the more active harrying of the devil in the persons of old witches, sorcerers, and the like. And thus it was, that Religion, in its temporary character as Philosophy, gave rise to those religious wars and heresy-huntings, those witch-burnings and Inquisitions, which have stained the religions of the Past and disgraced the civilization of the world. A little reflection, however, will convince us that Religion must cease in the future to contain within itself a Philosophy of the world of phenomena; and, in consequence, must cease to produce those unfortunate and lamentable results which have flowed from it in the Past. For as religious causes were only wanted to eke out scientific causes not yet discovered, it is clear that when science shall cover the whole field of phenomena with its own explanations, religious causes will no longer be required; and the actions which we saw to have formerly flowed from the belief in these causes must cease. That part of Religion which was formerly Philosophy will pass over to Science as its proper domain, and so leave to Religion only her true and perennial function of harmonizing the mind.

Such have been the incidental and deplorable (but nevertheless strictly logical) effects of Religion in its character of

Philosophy, when acting on the ordinary nature and passions of men. If it be asked what has been its proper and steady function, I shall now endeavour to show, that it has been to *maintain the status quo reached at any given point, to support the existing regime and the authority of the powers that be*. Now, this will not only prove to have been the case historically, but is precisely what, from a variety of purely *a priori* considerations, we should have expected. For Religion, although it has really been the effect and result of human thought and culture, nevertheless always had claim to a supernatural origin—to be received by man as a revelation imposed from above. Its decisions, in consequence, must always have had that absolute and final character befitting their unimpeachable authority, and hence, as it has grown at bottom out of the same root, it has naturally consecrated the successive temporal *regimes* with which it has been bound up. It may therefore truly be said to be the great conservative factor—the great negative pole—in civilization. That this must be the case will be seen on still other *a priori* grounds. Religion, in its character of Philosophy, is, as we have seen, the *complement* of Science. When Science could explain little, it had to explain much, when Science came to explain more, it had to explain less, and now that Science explains almost everything, there is little or nothing for it to do. And hence, if in civilization, Science is the active the reforming factor, we should expect to find Religion the supplementary and conservative factor. And so indeed, we shall find it to be, if we take a glance through History, where we shall see that it has initiated nothing new, nothing positive, but has served merely to secure conserve, and make permanent what has already been brought about by other and more positive agencies. When, for example, the circumstances of savage life made it necessary that wandering tribes should be united under a Chief, and military subordination become necessary to the defence and even existence of these tribes, Religion, in its rude and primitive form

consecrated his authority, enjoined military obedience, and punished insubordination. When separate tribes became united by conquest into nations and kingdoms, it consecrated the King. When the religious and social relations between these peoples became so complex as to render necessary a common code of morality, Religion consecrated that code, and gave it permanence ; as, for example, in the Ten Commandments. When Society constituted itself on a hierarchy of castes, as in the East, it was Religion that consecrated the system and still perpetuates it. It consecrated, too, the old Roman constitution ; and, so long as the Republic lasted, it upheld the authority of the leading families, by the familiar fiction of their being descended from the gods. In the same way, it afterwards consecrated the Emperors. St. Paul struck the key-note when, in the name of Religion, he counselled men to respect the authority of the Powers that be. The Papacy upheld the Feudal *Régime* in Europe. The English Church first consecrated the King and upheld his divine right ; then when the Revolution of '88 threw the balance of power into the hands of the aristocracy, Religion upheld their political authority, and, indeed, still continues to uphold both their political and social privileges. That the part played in civilization by Religion in its character of Philosophy, is to consecrate the existing Authority, and to maintain the existing *Régime*, may be perhaps even better seen in those apparent exceptions, which, after all, only prove the rule. For you will observe that, in every instance in which religion has consecrated or abetted revolution, it has always been a religion that was itself in revolt against the established religion. When the early Christians refused to fight in the legions of the Roman imperial army, it was because the Empire was bound up with that system of Paganism against which they themselves were in revolt. But, from the time that Christianity became the religion of the Empire, the Christians were the first to uphold the sacredness of the Emperor, and the foremost

to defend the Empire against the inroads of the barbarians. Puritanism first revolted against the established Church, and then against the authority of the King, and sanctioned his execution. It was because Presbyterianism first defied the Episcopal authority, that it afterwards abetted the people in their defiance of the Civil power. The history of Dissent in England has been a record of antagonism, first to the Church, and then to that conservative and aristocratic *regime* with which it is in close alliance. The same Church which denounced slavery in the Northern States of America, upheld it in the Southern. If the Roman Catholic Church is still hostile to the Republic in France, it is not only because it believes the Republic to be agnostic or atheistic in tendency, but because it believes there is still a chance for the restoration of the old *regime* and also because France has cut her self off from the old feudal monarchies which the Church has always upheld. It is significant to find however, that it has not set itself in opposition to the Republic in America. Once let the chances of a Monarchy in France recede to the vanishing point, or the progress of the world establish republican forms of government in the leading European States, there can be little doubt that the Catholic Church would as stoutly uphold the republican forms, as it had once upheld their monarchical predecessors.

The fourth and last great factor in Civilization is *Science*.

With Religion proper, to give that harmony to the mind of man it craves and every stage of civilization, without which he would be torn in twain and paralysed for any prolonged or useful activity, with Material and Social Condition as the roots out of which the civilization of any given period *unintentionally* arises, with Religion in it character as Philosophy, to secure and consolidate the civilization reached and prevent it from retrograding—we have now to seek for the *uplifting* factor—the factor that pushes on the whole from stage to stage. In the following remark it will be my object to show

that this factor is Science, in the widest sense of that term; and that it impels civilization onwards by a two-fold action—by altering and ameliorating the Material and Social Conditions from *below*, at the same time that it breaks down the successive Religious Philosophies which restrain it from *above*.

So universally recognised, indeed, is the influence of Science in altering and improving the material and social conditions of men, that to enter into details would be a work of supererogation. Suffice it to say that, by and through its application to the industrial arts, it has given to civilized man all those comforts, conveniences, and appliances which distinguish him from the savage; those labour-saving inventions which have thrown the emphasis of his energies from physical labour to more and more complicated forms of intellectual activity: which, in a word, have spared his muscles and exercised his brains; and which one day must largely supersede that monotonous and degrading bodily labour which imbrutes Man and fixes a fatal bar to his elevation in the scale of civilization. Science, too, it is that has given to modern nations those implements of war—those engines, guns, torpedoes, and weapons of precision—which now enable the weakest of civilized powers to rest in security against the danger of a repetition of those barbarian invasions which wrecked the civilizations of the ancient world. And lastly, it is Science which, by the variety of professions, trades, and occupations it has called into being (and by the wide variety of disposition, manners, and culture to which this variety of occupation has given rise) has, by the many sides of the mind it has stimulated into activity, given that finer culture, delicacy, and refinement of mind which distinguish the inhabitants of great commercial and industrial centres from the dull and torpid inhabitants of the country districts.

But not only has Science been the main agent in altering and improving those material and social conditions out of which civilization arises; it has also been the main agent in

equalizing these conditions, and so rendering possible a further advance. It was the discoveries of Science that rendered the invention of gunpowder possible, the invention of gunpowder, in turn, put man and man practically on a footing of physical equality, and this physical equality was the main agent in abolishing the condition of serfdom in which the majority of mankind had previously lain, and in raising men's ideal above that low level of mere physical force, which characterizes the lower civilizations. It was discoveries in Science too, that lay at the root of those great inventions of the steam engine and telegraph, which, by the facilities they afford for acquiring and diffusing knowledge, are gradually bringing the remotest districts to a practical equality of intelligence—political, moral, and social—with the great literary, scientific and political centres, and which, by bringing up to the general level that dead weight of degraded and half-brutal serfdom in which two-thirds of the population of Europe a few centuries ago lay, will prepare the way for a further general advance.

But Science has pushed forward civilization, not only *positively*, by ameliorating the material and social conditions on which it is immediately dependent, but *negatively*, by breaking down those successive religions, which in their character of philosophies, have upheld the *existing order of things* at every stage, and which, if left to themselves, would, from their claims to *absolute* authority, have perpetuated this order to all time. In a former chapter we saw that Science was the great agent in determining the widest general phases through which the religions of the world have passed—the successive stages of Animism, Fetichism, Polytheism, and Monotheism. We saw that among the lowest savages where the natural causes of all but the most ordinary phenomena were unknown, any event a little unusual, in time, place, or occasion, was referred to the will of some spirit, and almost every tree, stone, or animal, with any peculiarity, was worshipped as the

abode of some spiritual power. As more and more of these phenomena were seen to exhibit some order and regularity in their occurrence, the number of deities required became less; and those that remained, of necessity became more remote, and less capricious; and so we had Polytheism. As time went on, and Science discovered a still greater connexion and interdependence among the phenomena, it became more and more incredible that these innumerable polytheistic deities should have distinct and independent existences and jurisdictions; and so the deities were cut down at last to two major ones—God and the Devil—each of whom, however, had various minor and subordinate instruments—spirits, demons, and the like—to account for the smaller phenomena not otherwise explainable. And now that Science has shown that so much that was formerly considered evil is really good, and, through the industrial arts, has converted so many natural agents that were once evils into benefits; now that the old idea of Man being naturally wicked and made good only by grace, is giving place to the new idea that he is naturally good, but made bad by circumstances, the old idea of the Devil, with his minor spirits of darkness, has faded away into invisibility, and has left one Supreme Intelligence alone as the Cause of all things. And thus Science, by explaining more and more of the phenomena of the world by natural laws, left less and less for Religion; and in consequence fewer and fewer deities were required, until at last one Supreme Being alone is demanded as the cause and reason of the whole.

That Science has advanced civilization by breaking down those religious philosophies which have kept society stationary, will be still further apparent on an examination of those Eastern civilizations which have come down to our own day.

If Science, as we have contended, is the ultimate and essential motive power in civilization, it will perhaps be inferred that without Science there could have been no great civilizations. But this is not necessarily the case. At any rate, all

the outward and imposing marks of civilization may be had with but comparatively little science. You may have immense and splendid armies, like Xerxes and Darius, mighty empires and cities, legions of vassals and slaves, and all with but little scientific knowledge proper; provided only you have vast populations of men, food abundant and cheap, and leaders possessed of those military and administrative talents which, in early societies, require rather quick parts and natural ingenuity than any special scientific attainments. You may have magnificent and imposing temples gorgeous palaces and monuments, with little more scientific knowledge than is involved in the ordinary laws of mechanics; provided only you have plenty of men at command, plenty of food with which to support them, and plenty of natural materials on which to employ them. The pyramids of Egypt, which are still among the wonders of the world, were the result of the labours of tens of thousands of slaves working for long years, the only science involved in their construction being such laws of physics, as by their application to the mechanical arts, gave the power necessary to bring those colossal stones from a distance, and to lift them into their places. But if civilizations so imposing have arisen on so slender a basis of science, we shall be prepared to find that, at the best, they were hollow and showy, rather than solid and substantial. The mighty monarchies of the East—the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian—may be justly said to have sprung up like mushrooms in a night, and in a night to have passed away. Like the visions of a distempered midnight dream, they chased one another into extinction, and were seen no more. Others again, as India and China, which were protected by their very remoteness from contact with those European influences which have done so much to change the ancient civilizations of the West of Asia and North of Africa, have continued to exist down to our own time in a stationary and stagnant condition.

Now, what I wish to point out is, that it was the very same

material and physical conditions which made these early civilizations so imposing, that were the cause of that want of science which made them so stagnant, hollow, or transitory. There can be little doubt that the love of abstract truth, for its own sake, is very weak among the great majority of mankind. It is only when his necessities, his hopes, fears, and unsatisfied desires, impel him, that man will take the trouble to search into things for the purpose of learning their nature and laws. And it is in these efforts made to satisfy his desires, to get food for himself out of an ungrateful soil, clothes and warmth in ungenial climates, that he gets his first rude and empirical knowledge of these laws. Observation and love of truth gradually co-operate with unsatisfied desire to still further add to this stock of positive knowledge, until, among the higher civilizations, the memory of what Science has done for humanity, and the enthusiasm for fresh discovery, gradually develop a class of men who are interested in truth on its own account, and who set themselves apart with conscious purpose to investigate the laws of Nature. But in countries like the East in primitive times, where life could be supported on a little rice, and where men had only to open their mouths, and dates and other nourishing fruits would fall into them, these earliest unsatisfied bodily desires which are necessary to initiate Science and to keep it alive, were not forthcoming; and Science, accordingly, made no progress. Even when population began to press on the means of subsistence, there was less chance of these early civilizations getting their desires satisfied by scientific processes for saving labour, or increasing the supply of food, than by migration, war, and conquest. And hence it is that Science in the East has never risen above those simple mechanical principles necessary for common conveniences and comforts; the making of weapons; and that empirical knowledge of chemistry and the arts, essential to minister to the pride, pomp, and circumstance of kings.

It is this absence of scientific knowledge among the Eastern

civilizations, which explains their most important characteristics—notably those of the civilization of India—viz., the supremacy of the priests, the institution of caste, and the stagnation in which both society and religion so long have lain. We have already seen that when the scientific cause of any phenomenon is unknown, it is referred, by a deep law of the human mind, to the agency of some supernatural will that is to say to a religious cause. As Religion is thus the complement of Science, it is evident that in those stages of civilization where *scientific* explanations except of the most ordinary events are not to be had, *religious* explanations must occupy the greater part of the field of human interest and enquiry. Religion, in consequence, must have a greater influence in the affairs of life than Science, and the priests who deal with religion greater power than the practical men and men of the world, who deal with science or its application to the arts. But from the time that Science is able to explain by natural laws the greater part of the operations both of Nature and of human life (thus leaving little for religion to explain), the practical men—whether kings, statesmen or men of business and trade—who can then control the ordinary objects of ambition, take the supremacy over the priests who can control only the occasional crises of life or its closing scenes. And hence it is that in India where scientific causes were almost entirely unknown (for reasons which we have just given) the lives and fortunes of men were continually falling within the range and jurisdiction of some deity or other, and the priests in consequence who, through their access to the deity, thus indirectly controlled the lives and fortunes of all classes alike, gained that ascendancy which they have maintained down to the present day. And just as among those wandering tribes, where food is precarious, where population is sparse and where every man is at once his own fisherman, hunter, and tent-maker the want of science gave to the deity a small and individual character, principally that of ancestral spirit and

to the wandering medicine-man and soothsayer who dealt with those spirits, the great authority they enjoyed ; so, in countries where population was dense, and where the very swarms of human beings necessitated organization and division of labour, the deities partook of the vast and imposing character which marked the country and the civilization ; the priests became a distinct body holding the supreme power ; and society assumed the simplest form compatible with great bulk and low organization, viz., the division into castes. That the son should follow the same calling as his father, and occupy the same position in the social hierarchy from generation to generation, was due, on the theoretical side, to the current belief in the exact and absolute transmission of hereditary qualities and aptitudes—a belief, by the way, which could only prevail in the absence of insight into the great complementary and compensating truth, partly scientific, partly spiritual, viz., that all men alike have a common identity of nature, and that each is open to all the truths, accomplishments, and powers of every other, although perhaps in a greater or less degree—on the practical side, to the impossibility in early societies (in the absence of any machinery for co-ordinating and controlling such vast masses of men) of allowing them to pass indifferently from one calling to another, especially where prejudices on the subject of marriage and of eating together were so strong.

With Society thus set, as it were, and consolidated into castes (for the above or other reasons), before Science had made any progress except of the most empirical kind, and with the priests at the top, what could happen but that it should remain fossilized for all time, if not interfered with from without ? With Religion to consecrate the social *régime* with which she was bound up ; with gods at hand to account for every event, action, or circumstance, the least unusual or extraordinary ; what living reason was there, in the absence of Science, for discrediting either the religion or the social *régime* ? Buddhism, it is true, was a secession ; but it was the result rather of

greater individual insight into the spiritual nature of man, than of a more scientific knowledge of Nature. Its doctrines, however splendid and sublime, could effect, in consequence, but little change in the general condition of the people. With *no scientific foundation as security and support for the finer spiritual doctrine*, the people, unirradiator by Natural Science, dragged the new system back again into the idolatry of the old. For this idolatry, with its innumerable deities and spirits to animate all unusual objects and to account for all unusual occurrences, harmonized with all they knew, and that for the simple reason that they had no scientific knowledge with which it could be out of harmony. The consequence was that the civilization as a whole has remained stagnant and unchanged to the present day, and is not likely to be reformed and advanced by any Religious Philosophy whatever Christian or other, but only by the heaven of Science introduced into it from without. For once show a man the natural law which any phenomenon obeys, so as to enable him to predict the phenomenon for himself and to teach others to do the same, no priesthood, however potent, can prevent that man from withdrawing it from the agency of the deity who was believed to preside over it, and placing it under the dominion of natural law.

If Science has thus been the main agent in pushing on Civilization, by breaking down those great religious systems which consecrated old and worn-out *regimes*, it has also been the main agent in determining the lesser changes in the development of these great systems, prior to their decadence or their passage into higher forms. Not that the changes were necessarily brought about by the progress of Natural Science only. On the contrary, they were often brought about by greater insight into the laws of mind—that Mental Science which, as I have attempted to show, is neither the old Metaphysics on the one hand, or the new Psychology on the other. Buddhism, for example, with its doctrine of human equality, was a deeper spiritual insight than Brahminism with its doctrine of caste.

Pure Christianity, with its broad universality and its deification of the spirit, was a finer spiritual insight than Judaism, with its narrow sectarianism, and deification of the letter. Mahomedanism, with its unity of God, was a finer insight than that miserable Byzantine Christianity which it superseded, with its ridiculous disputations as to the procession of the Holy Ghost, its image-worship, and the like. Western Catholicism, again, with its doctrine of work, was a deeper insight into the world than Mahomedanism, with its doctrine of fate. Early Protestantism, with its 'right of private judgment,' and toleration of science, was in advance of Catholicism, with its doctrine of 'absolute submission,' and its condemnation of science. And, lastly, Modern Protestantism, with its acceptance of science, is a higher development than the old Protestantism, with its six days' creation, its verbal inspiration, its miracles, and the like.

Such, in general outline, are the parts played in Civilization by the four cardinal factors—Religion, Material and Social Conditions, Religion as Philosophy, and Science. There are, I am aware, other factors of scarcely less importance, but as they are all the results of special combinations among these four, and are implicitly bound up in them, I have passed them by. Art and Poetry, for example, are of the very first importance, but they are products of the union of Religion, Science, and Material and Social Conditions, rather than initiatory causes in themselves. The Industrial Arts, too, are the result of the application of Science to labour and natural products, and so are direct effects of the union of Science with Material and Social Conditions; while Practical Morality is, as we have seen, the direct product of the Material and Social Conditions, and the relations which they necessitate. They are all effects rather than causes; and, indeed, may be almost said to be Civilization itself, rather than the factors that go to produce it.

CHAPTER V.

DYNAMICS

HAVING exhibited the factors *separately*, and in their *statical* relations, from the standpoint of the effects produced on Civilization by them, I now propose, by way of giving greater completeness to the theory, to exhibit the factors in *combination*, and in their *dynamical* relations, taking as my standpoint the nature of Man himself.

All thinkers, whether they be Theist or Atheist, Transcendentalist or Materialist, Christian or Comunist, feel and agree that there is in man an Ideal of expansion and elevation of mind and heart which is not only the end of Nature but is the goal of society, and to forward which the efforts of all the good and wise should be directed. This ideal has not yet been realised by the world but exists rather as a motor principle and bright intuition of the mind. It rises before the imagination of men, like a pillar of fire in the darkness, inciting them to new and higher efforts in the cause of humanity, and cheering them, by hope, as they plod their way through the wilderness of Time. But just as the beautiful flower, although lying latent in the seed, has to await the slow growth and development of root and branch and stem, as the mariner can only reach the haven where his wife and children dwell by skilfully tacking about and taking advantage of wind and tide or as a profound thought in legislation must patiently abide the time when the hindrances to its acceptance shall have been cleared away, so this ideal of moral and intellectual elevation has to be slowly wrought out of the stubborn materials of the world and to be reached through a thorny and entangled thicket of physical, organic, and spiritual obstructions. It can

only, at best, therefore, be realised in the far distant future. The golden age of peace, liberty, justice, purity, and love, for example, is an ideal which all the wise and good seek to forward, as well as love to contemplate; and yet so obstinate hitherto have been the material and social obstructions of the world, that after eighteen Christian centuries it has still to be realised. But while the *World-in-general* thus moves slowly and with difficulty towards its goal, in the meantime, it is to be noted, the souls of the *individuals* that make up the world are impatient, and cannot rest until they have entered in imagination that ideal kingdom which is theirs by native birthright, to enjoy it, live in it, and conform their lives to it. To enable them to do this, and by thus overleaping the barriers of Time, to realise *now and here* that ideal world of the future on which the mind loves to dwell, is the aim, business, and function of our first great factor—*Religion*—each and all of whose forms, it is to be remarked, are, in their own way, and according to the stage of culture reached, able to satisfy the aspirations and longings of the *individual* soul—whether it be Brahminism, Buddhism, Judaism, Mohammedanism, or Christianity. But although these religions have, each in its own way, been able to harmonize the minds and satisfy the aspirations of *individual* men, it is important to observe that they have facilitated or retarded the march of the *race* to its final goal, in proportion as another great factor—the *Religious Philosophy* in which each is embodied—has displayed insight into the laws of nature and of human life; and so has given more or less range and expansion to the movements of the human spirit. For if that Ideal, which is the goal of the nations, has to be cut through the entanglements of physical, organic, and spiritual obstructions, it is evident that the religion which exhibits most insight into these laws, alone or in their entirety, is best fitted to open a passage for society to reach the end in view. And thus it is that as the world advances we shall find that the successive religions have each opened up an outlet for some side or other

of human thought and aspiration, closed to its predecessors. The Theocratic Polytheism of India, for example, which consecrated the institution of caste, gave thereby less chance of elevation and expansion of mind to the great masses of men, than the Monotheism of Mahomet, or the intellectual Polytheism of Greece, which opened up an equal arena to all the free citizens. Mohammedanism itself, again, when its first burst of fanaticism had subsided, and its secret structure began to reveal itself, was found to be incapable of expansion, devoid of sympathy, and fatal to material and intellectual advancement. The Koran professed to be not only a spiritual revelation, but a scientific treatise; to close not only the book of inspiration, but the book of knowledge. It accordingly discouraged all attempts of man to discover the order of the world, and thereby to improve his condition; while its central doctrine led him to repose indolently on the decrees of an inexorable fate. The consequence was, that under this belief the human mind stagnated, and, as we see it this hour in those nations that are deeply imbued with its spirit, progress, civilization, and morality, lie rotting together. The Stoic, too, best of Pagans, who longed to realize in himself that virtue which was the glorious ideal of his mind, found his feet entangled like the rest of the world, in the meshes of earthly trials and afflictions, which he could neither control by insight, nor subordinate by power. He attempted, accordingly, to elevate himself above them by ignoring them, or trampling them with pride and disdain under his feet. Judaism again, on the other hand, from its tribal pride and narrowness, and with its exclusive and aristocratic Jehovah, could never become a religion of wide universal expansion. But Christ, living in His great conception of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of Man, perceived that all things worked together for good; that trouble and affliction were instruments of good; and that the end of Nature was neither the aggrandizement and pride of one small tribe, nor the unlimited gratification of

the individual, but a universal sympathy, a general beneficence. Instead, therefore, of trampling on the world, like the Stoic, or despising all but his own race, like the Jew, he would have us reverence the world, and love it, and by a grand act of renunciation (inasmuch as in a limited world unlimited gratification is impossible) raise ourselves to that Ideal in which he loved to dwell. While Stoicism, then, from its imperfect human sympathies could not, and Judaism, from its narrowness and pride, would not make headway in the virgin soil of barbarism, Christianity, by giving free expansion to the mind, heart, and imagination, was in its essence favourable to an advance in civilization. But as it gradually became embedded and lost in the intellectual dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church, although its spirit still continued to operate in softening the cruelties of barbarous warfare, in elevating the position of women, and in keeping Society together, its doctrines were found to be hostile to progress, morality, and civilization. From the view of the World and Man which these doctrines held in solution—that is to say, from the Religious Philosophy which it embodied—were precipitated by a fatal sequence and necessity, religious persecution, witch-burning, hatred of Science, and that attempt to stifle the aspirations of Reason which has made the Middle Ages so repulsive to the modern mind. Protestantism followed, with its ‘liberty of private judgment,’ and helped to lift the incubus that was pressing on the souls of men; and the movement, once begun, has been continued by Criticism and Science, until now, in the most cultured portions of the most advanced and civilized nations, no restraints exist to bar enquiry, or prevent the fullest enlargement and expansion of thought.

While *Religion*, in each and all of its forms, is equally capable of raising *individuals* to the highest moral grandeur; and while it has advanced or retarded the progress of the *race* to its ideal goal in proportion as the *religious philosophies*, with which it has been bound up, have exhibited more or less insight into the

laws of the world and of human life, nevertheless it is important to remark that no religion, however sublime, can jump the element of Time, and raise the race at a bound to that ideal which it announces and foreshadows, until a third great factor *the Material and Social Conditions*, is already prepared for it. I notice it is everywhere assumed, and indeed the assumption seems reasonable, that if Religion has the power to raise one man (in spite of the general state of society around him) to a point of moral elevation where he is superior to fate and death, it has equally the power to raise a million, a nation, a world. But nothing will be found more illusory in fact. For society, be it observed, with its division and co-operation of labour, thought, and industry, is, if not an organism, at all events as much inter-related in its parts as the parts of an animal or tree, and such is the sympathetic connexion of each part with every other, that, like seed and fruit, head and extremities, no one organ or part can be monstrously developed, without the rest becoming correspondingly atrophied. And just as the outbreak of celibacy in the early Christian ages could only arise out of the colossal luxury and dissipation to which it served as foil and counterpoise, or as, in an aristocratic state of society, one class of men cannot be haughty, insolent, and independent, without the other classes being correspondingly cringing, dependent, and submissive, so one body of men cannot have *their hearts fixed on what are called the 'eternal realities'*, without the great masses of the people being absorbed in the temporary passions, interests, efforts, and ideals of the hour. The truth is, the vast majority of men are so steeped in the practical work of the day that (like the polypus, which is said to change its colour with the object to which it adheres), their opinions, sentiments, and codes of morality take their tone and character from the surroundings in which they move, and the occupations in which they are engaged. It is this subduing of the mind to the element it works in, which is the natural and compensating check that defeats all attempts to force a

hot-house morality on mankind. Crusades there have been, and 'revivals' of religion there will continue to be ; but until the material and social conditions are lifted out of the plane where the 'money-bag of Mammon' is the idol of the nations, and where men in general can be labelled with the names of the functions they perform or the traditions in which they have been brought up, that high ideal of elevation and expansion of mind which is the aim of Religion and the goal of Society, can never be realized among the masses of mankind. There is, perhaps, no more pernicious illusion than the universally-prevalent and complacent assumption that if the Ideal is not realizable here and now, it ought to be or might be. This is the secret source from which have issued those wailings over the existence of Evil, and those discussions as to its origin, which for so many ages have troubled the intellects of men. This is the source of that disgust with life, which characterizes those who sit sentimentalizing over the Ideal, without putting forth their hand to help the Actual. What right have we to assume that the highest beauty of character and life is to spring full-equipped from the earth, like Minerva from the head of Jove? As well expect the aloe-flower to spring in full blossom from its seed by the mere wave of a wand. One secret of the world is, that all great and enduring results in character and life have to be patiently wrought out in *Time*; and to misapprehend this is not so much a presumption of moral delicacy and refinement, as of poverty and weakness of thought.

But besides the Ideal in Man—which Religion exists to satisfy—there is also the Real—real appetites, passions, sentiments, necessities, and luxuries of the body and mind, hunger, thirst, love of life, of liberty, of knowledge, of sympathy, of power. All advance in civilization of one age or people over another consists either in the greater abundance of objects to satisfy these desires, the more just and equitable distribution of them throughout the great body of the people, or in the rise

and emphasis of men's aims from the lower of them, up to the higher and highest. If we contrast the actual state, not only of material wealth and prosperity, but of morality, justice, elevation and expansion of mind, at the present time with what it was some centuries ago, a distinct advance is visible. The decline in war and bloodshed, in cruelty and ferocity, in civil and religious persecutions, in gross excitements and sensual indulgences, are all real advances in civilization. So, too are the anchoring in manners and social intercourse, in the criminal law, the greater reverence for human life, for women, and for man as man. And in the coming ages we may confidently anticipate a still further advance in justice, sincerity, sympathy, expansion of mind, benevolence, love of truth, and magnanimity. If, then, we arrest civilization at any given point in the long line of its evolution, make a section of it, and ask on what the mental and moral characteristics of that section depend, we shall find that their proximate and immediate cause is the third great factor above referred to—the Material and Social Conditions. For things will make their own relations, that is to say, their own *morality*—material, political and social—and prescribe the aims, aspirations, and ideals of men. Climate, soil, and natural agents united with race and population in determining whether the early civilizations should have the quick and mushroom-like growth of the great Oriental monarchies of the Old World, or the slow, compact, and steady advance of Modern European communities. The material and social relations of the different peoples, internal and external, unite with these primary conditions to necessitate a particular structure of society, a particular distribution of political power, and thus in its turn, gives rise to a particular distribution of social power. And from all these are directly bred the sentiments, aspirations and ideals of the different peoples, their public opinion, and stock of recognized ideas. For the practical relations that exist between man and man, between people and people, generate a set of practical *beliefs* as their images

and counterparts. The world, in general, judges of men and things (of what is high and what is low, of what is right and what is wrong, of what is good and what is evil) by the way in which they *see* them related to each other, in spite of all theories drawn from wider, deeper, more subtle and more comprehensive relations. The necessities of peoples, for example, demanded that supreme power should be placed in the hands of one of their number, who was to be called Chief or King; and the people, *seeing* the power exercised by him over other men, became imbued with the idea of his immeasurable superiority in nature and attribute over common mortals. In aristocratic countries where the soil has been appropriated by a few great proprietors, the power which such ownership gave them from generation to generation over the people that dwelt on the land, gave rise to the idea, almost to the axiom, of the general superiority of these proprietors to all others; and so the doctrine of the inequality of men founded on birth, became a fixed belief in the minds of the people. In democratic countries, on the other hand, where material and social conditions are practically equal, and no one man or class of men is *seen* habitually to dominate the rest, but all have equal rights, duties, privileges, and advantages, the generalization that all men are equal is the pervading thought, and to assume the contrary would be resented as a serious insult. And thus it is that men's circumstances, surroundings, and relations leave their impress on their ideas and aspirations, as their callings and occupations do on their general outward style and demeanour.

The civilization of any given epoch, then, is the *immediate* result of the material and social conditions of that epoch, and images and reflects them. If religious philosophies were to have their own way entirely, they would, by consecrating these material and social relationships, perpetuate them unchanged to all time. But we know that the material and social conditions are constantly changing and improving, and that

civilization is constantly advancing. There must be, therefore, some *dynamical* and active force at work somewhere in society to cause this advance; some impetus, initiative, and self-evolved power which is not the mere reflex of the material and social surroundings, but which, while breaking down the old religious philosophies, pushes on these conditions to higher and higher developments. Were it not so, indeed, we should, like the lower animals, tread the same monotonous round for ever. And when we ask what this dynamical power is—this power that communicates the impulse, sets the ball a-rolling, and initiates a new departure in civilization and progress—the answer will be found in that same Ideal in the mind of man which has not as yet been realized in this world, but which cannot rest until it has conformed the real world more and more to its image. It is this Ideal which is constantly building up the New Civilization which ever lies more or less concealed under the Old, and which, when the Old has decayed and fallen to pieces, comes forth to take its place. This Ideal has many sides, but they may be all summed up in the old and well-recognized forms—the love of Beauty, the love of Right, the love of Truth. The love of Beauty, with the splendid Art, Poetry, and Music of the ages to which it has given rise, need not detain us here; as its effects in elevating and refining the mind are so well and so universally recognized. The love of Right, while always softly active, like sunlight, ever and anon bursts forth like a flood of rolling fire when tyranny and oppression are full, blasting and withering; and when the hopes of mankind seem most crushed and forlorn, rising in its majesty to vindicate the infinitude of the soul. But unless reinforced by the reception of some new and regenerating truth into the general mind, or attended by some wide-spread and radical change in the material and social conditions, its effects are evanescent and transitory; and the startled world, wakened perhaps for a moment from its dream by the bright meteoric splendour, sinks again into sleep and

darkness. It is the love of Truth, making Science—our fourth and last great factor—its instrument,—that is the real and final *dynamic* and germinative force in civilization. It finds its agents in those solitary and sequestered individuals, who, impelled by its spirit, throw a more comprehensive glance over the field of existence, see things in subtler and wider relations, open up new riches and magnificence in tracts hitherto barren or unexplored, and give a new and deeper interpretation to life. Such men have been, on the one hand, the Spiritual Thinkers, who have founded religions and systems of philosophy; and on the other, the Scientific Observers, who have discovered the physical laws of Nature. And when these men arise, then it is that the Old Civilization begins to heave and ferment with the fire new-lit in its inwards, which, working outwards from the central heart to the sodden and torpid extremities, gradually transforms and revivifies the whole. But observe that these successive religions and philosophies do not follow one another as complete transformations, like the shifting scenes in a panorama, but glide imperceptibly into each other rather, each one being blended and interfused with all that have preceded it. The pure religion of Christ, for example, falling on Pagan times, becomes tinged in its ritual with Pagan idolatry, and in its creed with Pagan philosophy. Its simple and homogeneous structure, when stretched on the loom, is swiftly set upon by Greek metaphysicians, Egyptian mystics, Neo-platonists, Jews, and Orientalists generally, who interweave it with their subtleties, and dye or stain it with their peculiar superstitions, sentiments, and habits of thought. Learned Divines are kept busy in Ecumenical Councils and elsewhere, superintending the selection of fibres, and blending of colours; an Emperor occasionally standing by and dictating the particular threads of subtlety which are to be interwoven, while his Empress, perhaps, is indulging her preference by choosing the colour which most strikes her fancy. In the meantime, heresies and schisms are falling out here and there

—rents in the texture, slits in the seam—which, however are promptly darned up again, until, after infinite effort, the vast and variegated web at last issues from the loom, one and indivisible—the omnipotent Roman Catholic Church which over-stretches the world. After enwrapping the nations in its all-embracing folds during the long sleep of the Middle Ages, it begins again to show signs of disintegration. Grecian Thought and Culture, set free by the Mahommedan conquests, are again at work, loosening the cohesion of its well-knit texture, heresies follow one another with ever-increasing rapidity, until, with the Revival of Learning, the great Protestant schism splits it through the centre and leaves a yawning gap between its opposing sides. But still the disintegration goes on. Liberty of private judgment, once admitted, cannot again be suppressed. Criticism becomes scientific, and, when applied to history and chronology, gradually destroys the credibility of much of that old and revered record on which the religious faith of ages has been nourished. In the meantime solitary men, scattered here and there over Europe, have again taken to investigating Nature at first hand, in one or other small section of her vast operations and are discovering uniformities and laws in phenomena hitherto regarded as casual, capricious, or dependent on some supernatural will. Starting from different points, and working outwards in enlarging circles, they have gradually extended their generalizations until, meeting and combining as Modern Science, they have eaten away almost the last fibres of the old creed, and gone far in remodelling the structure of society. But Science herself, like the cosmogonies and religious philosophies which preceded her, has not been able to preserve her essential purity throughout. Her earlier generalizations were all more or less tinged with the metaphysical and quasi-theological conceptions of the times in which they arose, and, indeed, not until quite recently, has she altogether freed herself from these impurities. But, having at last succeeded in reducing all the operations of the

material world to one vast uniformity, nothing is now wanting to complete her triumph but that she should animate this otherwise dead and unmeaning mechanism with an intelligent and informing Soul.

While Science—in the form of Spiritual Insight and Natural Law—has thus removed from *above*, as it were, those successive theological stays which, by fixing each existing *régime*, would prevent civilization advancing; in the meantime, when applied to the mechanical, chemical, and industrial arts, it has pushed forward from *below* those material and social conditions out of which each successive civilization immediately and directly springs. It were needless, indeed, to recount again the discoveries and inventions which, since the Middle Ages, have so completely changed the face of the world; suffice it to say only, that by increasing the products of labour and facilitating their distribution, by diffusing knowledge and equalizing the power of the different classes and peoples, it has gone a great way towards *equalizing* the rights, duties, privileges, and responsibilities of all, and so preparing the way for a rise in men's ideals. And if, as is not improbable, the same inventions, discoveries, and arts, which have broken down the old Feudal concentration of authority and power in the hands of a particular class, and have been gradually equalizing the conditions of all classes, are now showing a tendency, by the operation of economic laws as inexorable, to an Industrial concentration no less pernicious, but in a different form, it is to Science that the Future will be confided—that science which, by diving into the deep elements of the problem—material and social—and ascertaining the physical and spiritual laws on which it depends, will, by again enabling us to *equalize* the conditions, prepare the way for a new and higher social *régime* than any that History has yet recorded.

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